SUPER BBC

同棲愛 ④

水城せとな

MY MOST
PRECIOUS PLACE.
IT IS ALWAYS
QUIET...
HOT AND MOIST.

CONTENTS

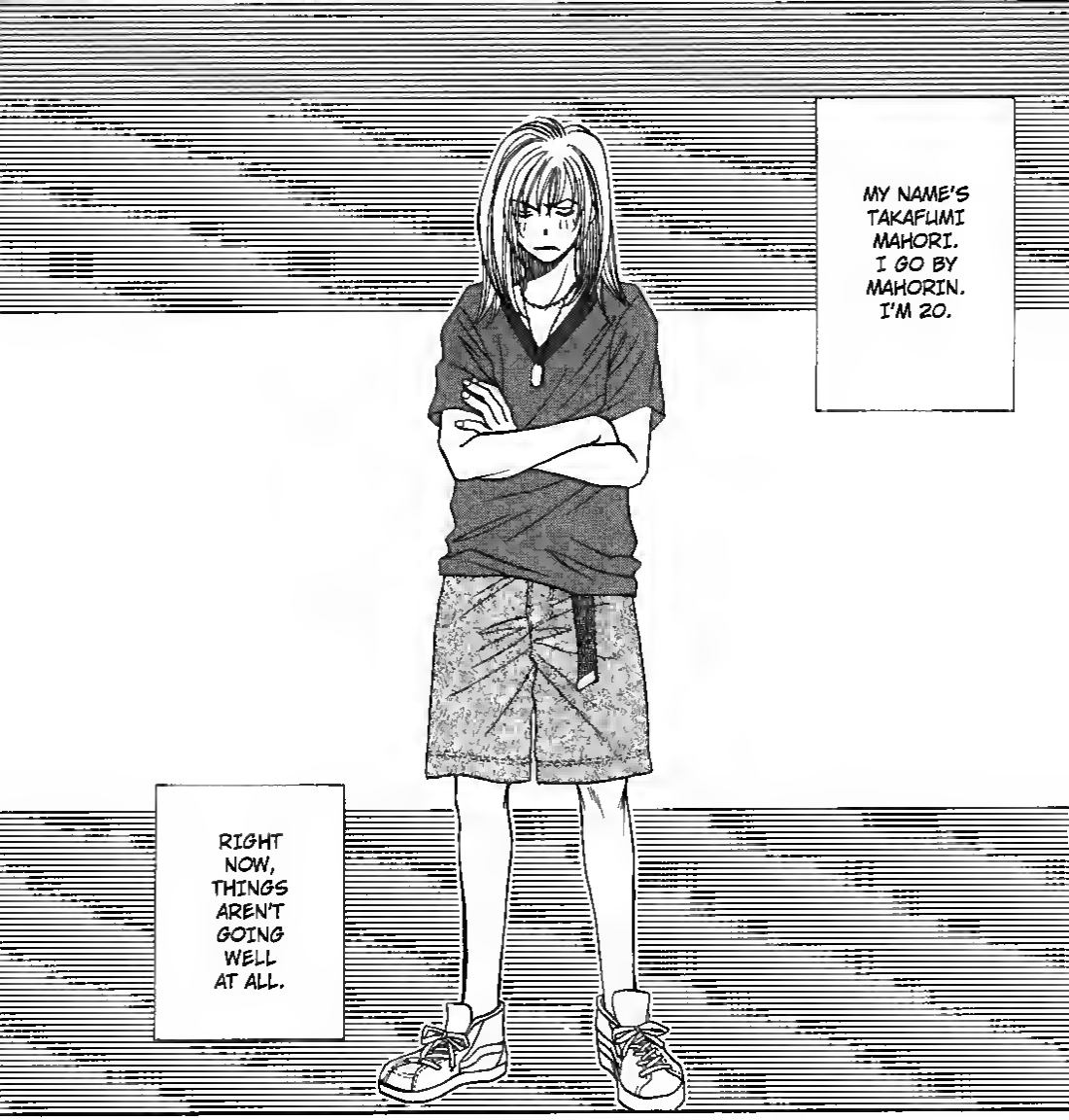
DOUSEI AI: LOVE UNDER ONE ROOF

VOL. [illegible]

ETONA MIZUSHIRO

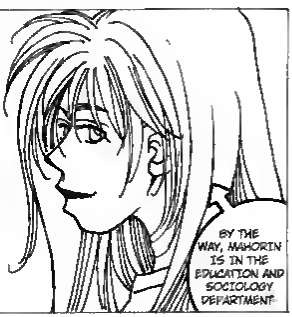
DOUSEI AI [illegible]

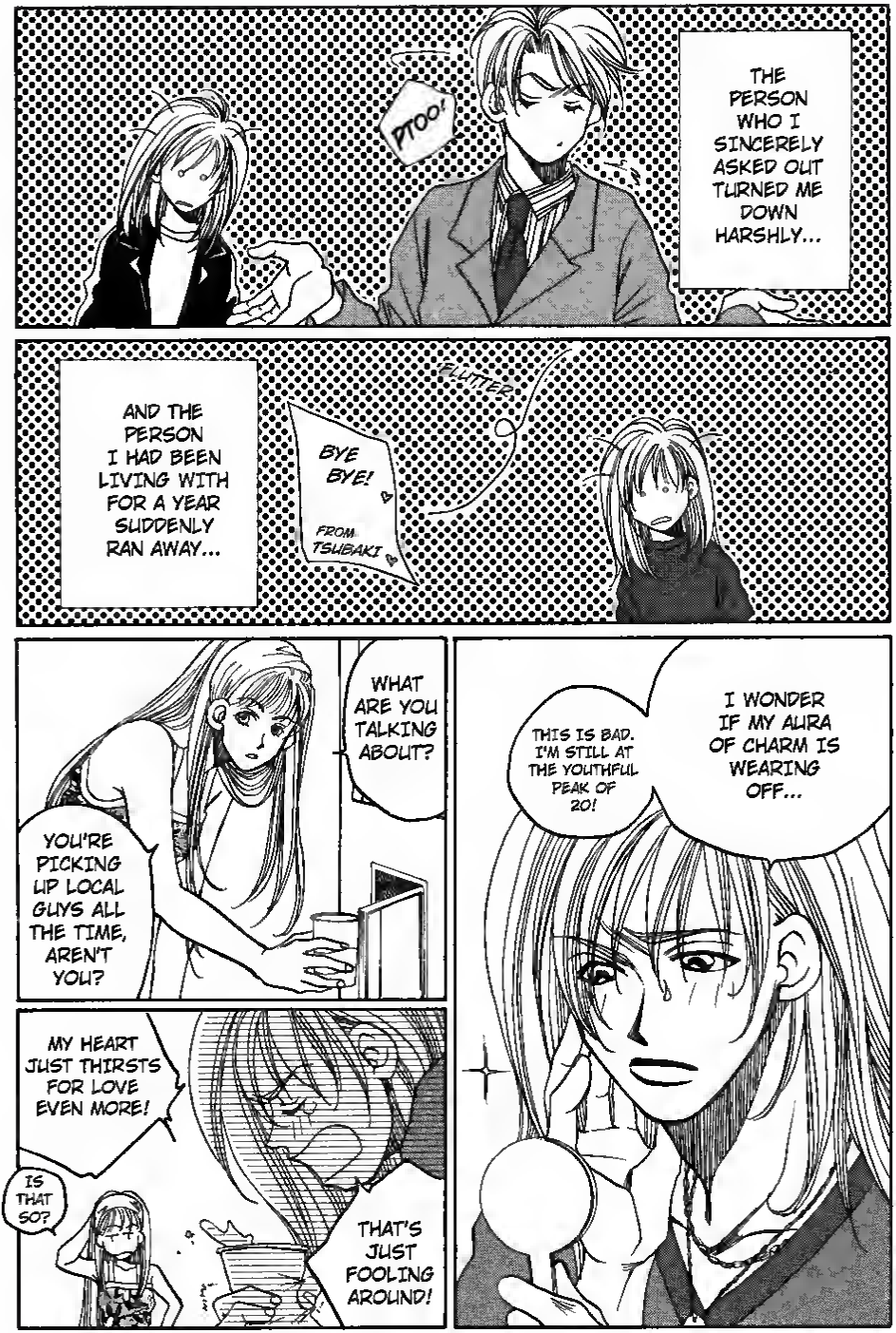
CHAPTER 25: MAHORIN'S REVIVAL



AUTHOR'S NOTES:

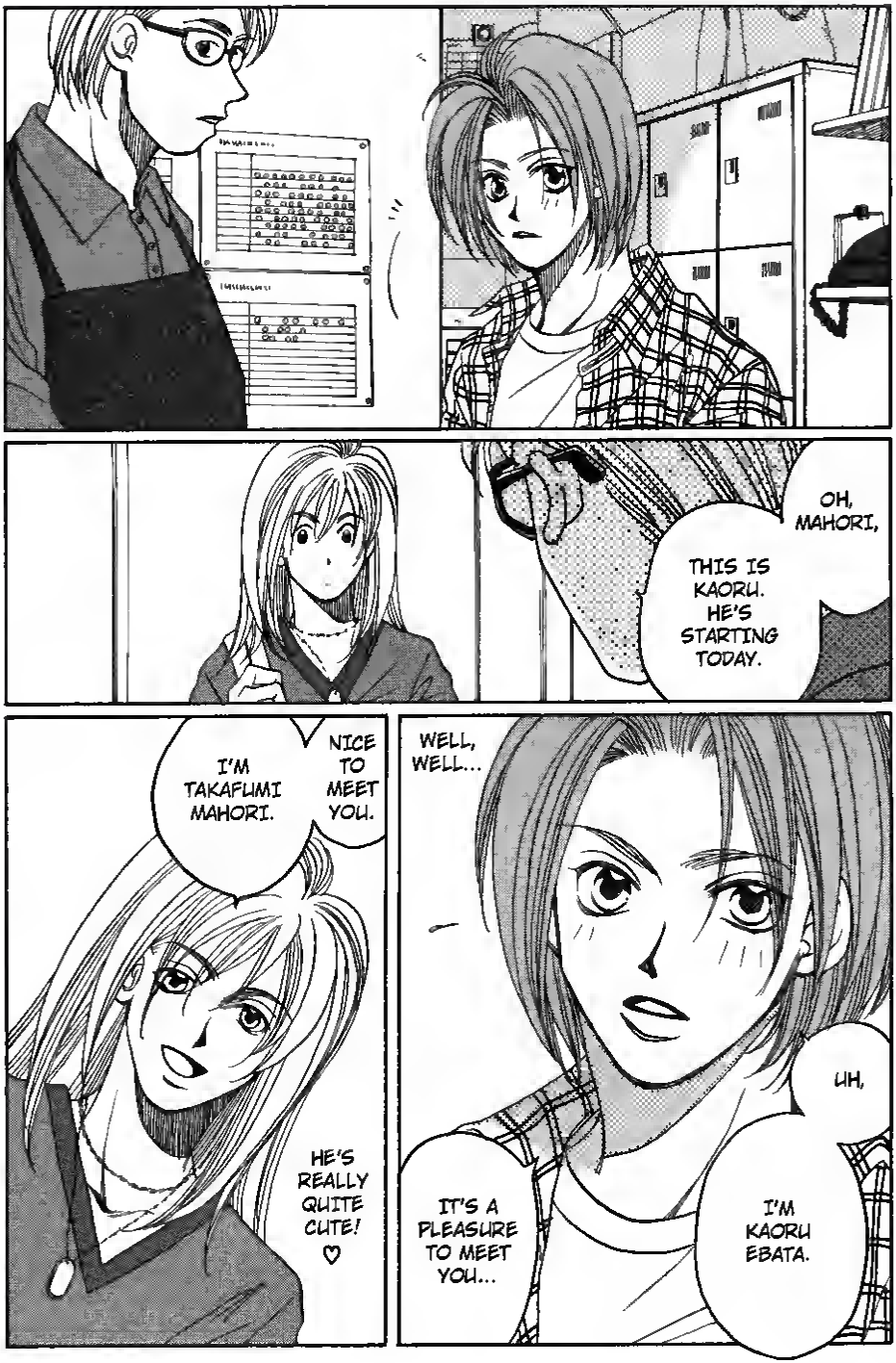
OCCASIONALLY I RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM READERS LIKE "WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DID YOU STUDY IN COLLEGE?" I ALSO GET ASKED IF I STUDIED PSYCHOLOGY, BUT I WAS JUST A REGULAR LITERATURE STUDENT. JAPANESE LITERATURE, MAINLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE. I TOOK PSYCHOLOGY AS AN ELECTIVE, BUT I DON'T THINK IT WAS PARTICULARLY USEFUL FOR DRAWING MANGA. ANYTHING I STUDIED WAS USEFUL, AND I THINK EVERYTHING THAT I SAW, HEARD, AND DID, AS WELL AS EVERYONE I MET INFLUENCED MY MANGA. CONVERSELY, IF YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN LEARNING, THEN YOU CAN'T GROW NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, RIGHT? LOVE OF LEARNING IS IMPORTANT, HUH?

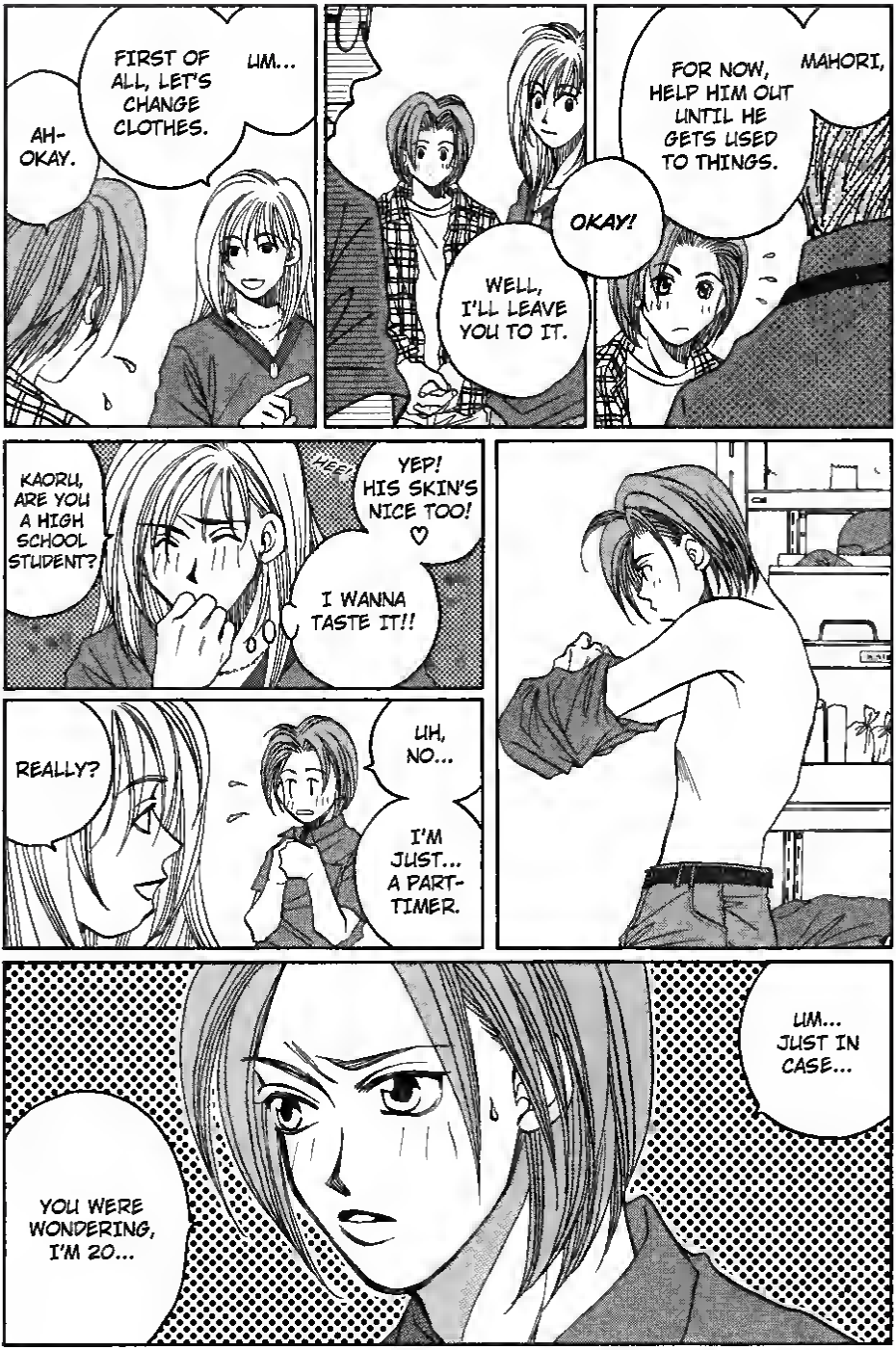


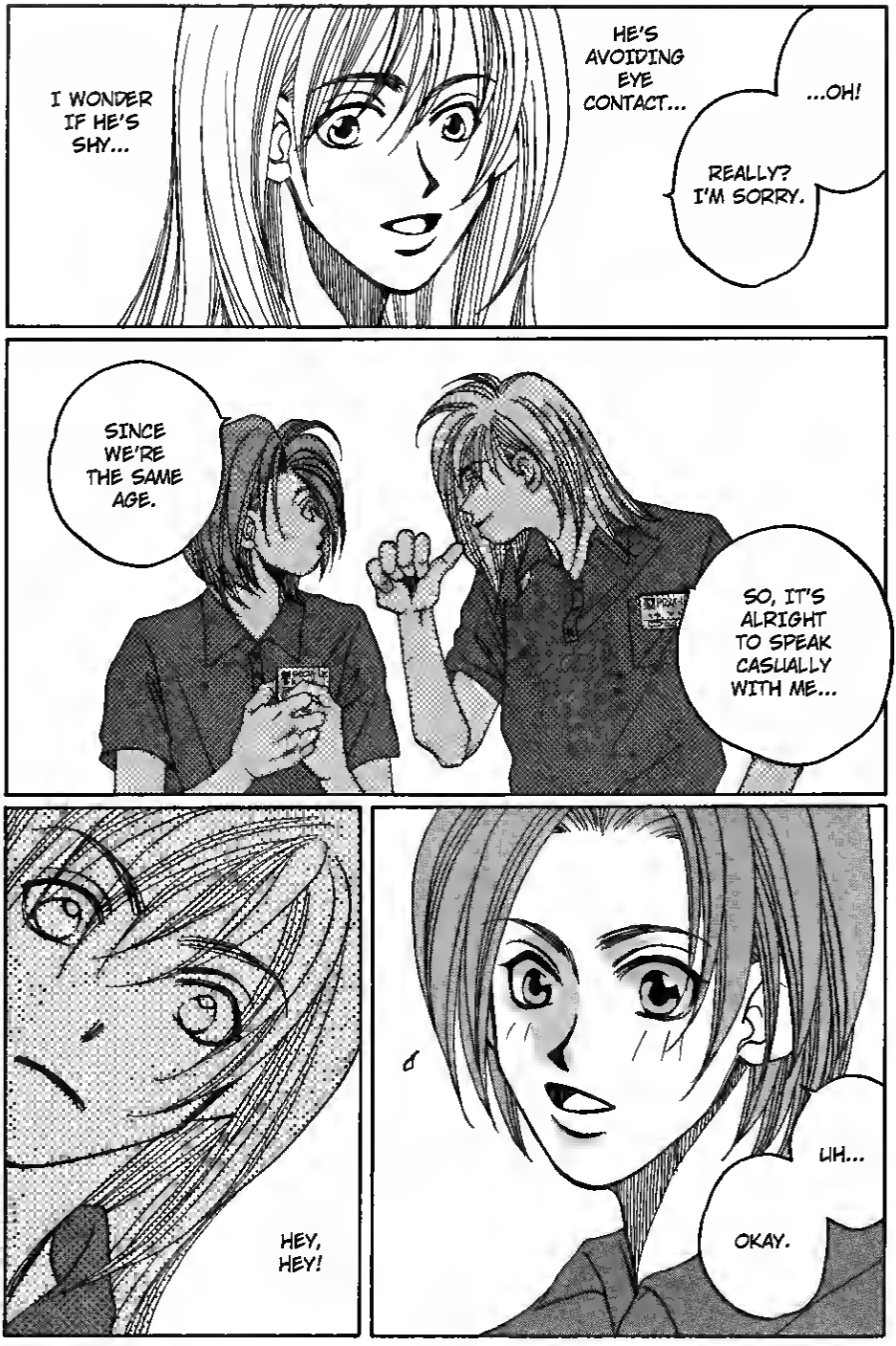

PTOO!
THE PERSON WHO I SINCERELY ASKED OUT TURNED ME DOWN HARSHLY...
AND THE PERSON I HAD BEEN LIVING WITH FOR A YEAR SUDDENLY RAN AWAY...
BYE BYE!
FROM TSUBAKI
FLUTTER
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE PICKING UP LOCAL GUYS ALL THE TIME, AREN'T YOU?
I WONDER IF MY AURA OF CHARM IS WEARING OFF...
THIS IS BAD. I'M STILL AT THE YOUTHFUL PEAK OF 20!
MY HEART JUST THIRSTS FOR LOVE EVEN MORE!
IS THAT SO?
THAT'S JUST FOOLING AROUND!

MAHORIN, ARE YOU ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE?
THE ONES THAT UNEXPECTEDLY END UP BEING A GOOD PERSON.
SHE'S HARU KITAJIMA, BUT GOES BY HARU. SHE'S 19.
SHE EASILY GOT STRAIGHT INTO THE COLLEGE THAT I HAD JUST BARELY GOTTEN INTO AFTER TAKING A YEAR OFF.
AND BESIDES THAT, SHE'S A GREAT LOOKING WOMAN WHO EVEN DOES MODELING FOR A FASHION MAGAZINE.
IT'S A PITY SHE'S NOT A GUY.
ARE YOU SAYING THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME?
BLEA
9
DON'T CRY ANY MORE!
BECOME THE WOMAN THEY NEVER LOSE INTEREST IN
I WONDER...
MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY CHARM.
WHY DO I HAVE TO END UP THAT WAY, HUH?
IT'S BETTER TO BE THOUGHT OF AS A GOOD GUY THAN A BAD GUY, BUT...

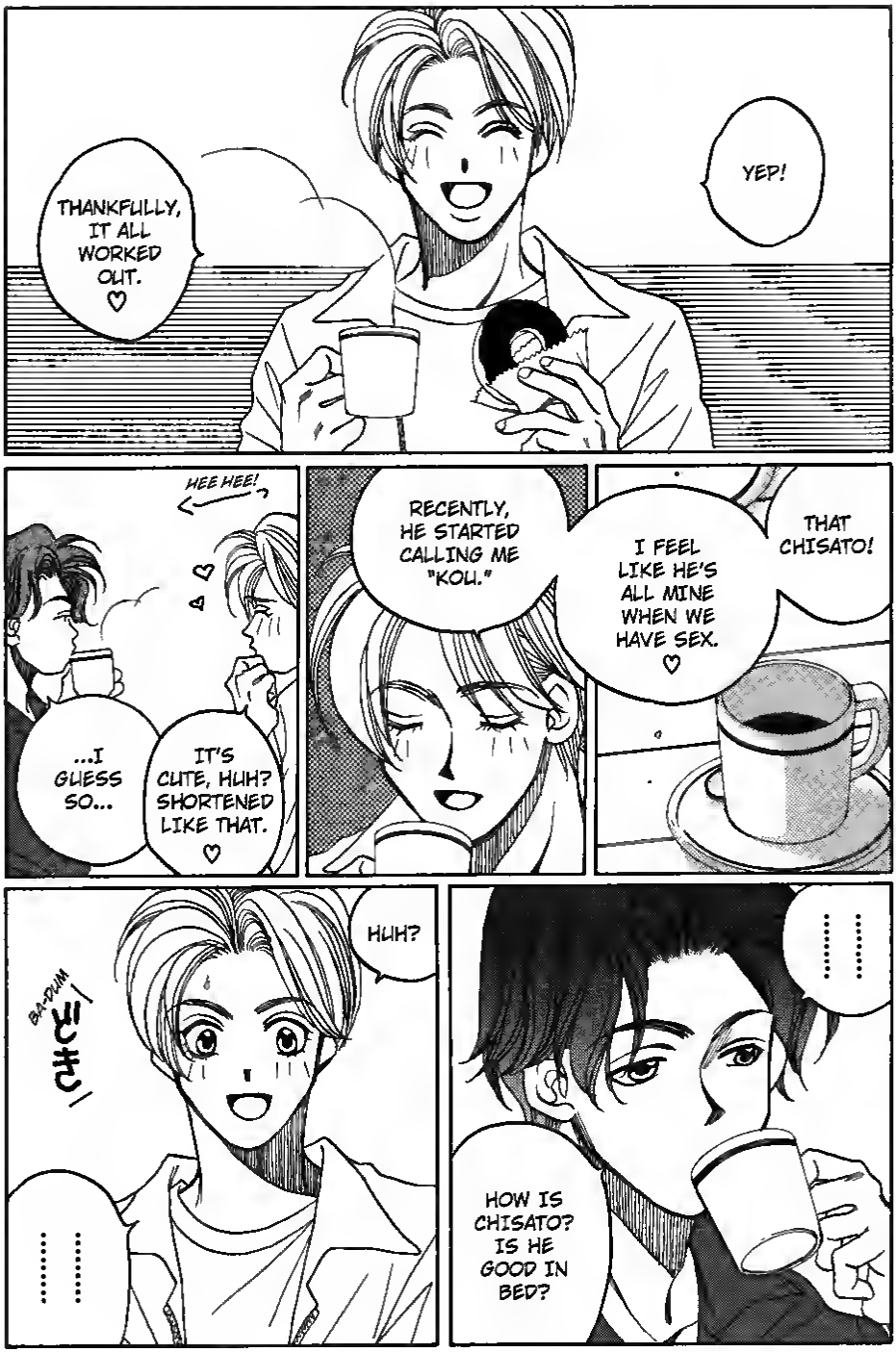
OH, MAHORIN.
COME WITH ME TO SHOP FOR CLOTHES TODAY.
NOPE.
I'VE GOT WORK.
WHAT?
PIZZA-LE
NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS GET, I CAN'T HANG MY HEAD.
GATCHA
YO.
IF I ONLY LOOK AT MY FEET...
I'LL OVERLOOK THE NEXT MEETING THAT COULD HAPPEN ANYWHERE AT ANYTIME.


OH, MAHORI,
THIS IS KAORU. HE'S STARTING TODAY.
WELL, WELL...
UH,
I'M KAORU EBATA.
IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU...
I'M TAKAFUMI MAHORI.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
HE'S REALLY QUITE CUTE! ♡


AH- OKAY.
UM... FIRST OF ALL, LET'S CHANGE CLOTHES.
WELL, I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT.
OKAY!
MAHORI, FOR NOW, HELP HIM OUT UNTIL HE GETS USED TO THINGS.
KAORU, ARE YOU A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT?
HEE?
YEP! HIS SKIN'S NICE TOO! ♡
I WANNA TASTE IT!!
REALLY?
UH, NO...
I'M JUST... A PART-TIMER.
UM... JUST IN CASE...
YOU WERE WONDERING, I'M 20...


I WONDER IF HE'S SHY...
HE'S AVOIDING EYE CONTACT...
...OH!
REALLY? I'M SORRY.
SINCE WE'RE THE SAME AGE.
SO, IT'S ALRIGHT TO SPEAK CASUALLY WITH ME...
HEY, HEY!
UH...
OKAY.

HEE HEE!!
HE'S REALLY, REALLY CUTE!!
I WANNA SCREW HIM...
Star Donut
...HM, I SEE...
YOU'RE GETTING ALONG HAPPILY NOW, HUH?


YEP!
THANKFULLY, IT ALL WORKED OUT. ♡
HEE HEE!
...I GUESS SO...
IT'S CUTE, HUH? SHORTENED LIKE THAT. ♡
RECENTLY, HE STARTED CALLING ME "KOU."
I FEEL LIKE HE'S ALL MINE WHEN WE HAVE SEX. ♡
THAT CHISATO!
HUH?
BA-DUM
DOKU
.....
.....
HOW IS CHISATO? IS HE GOOD IN BED?

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

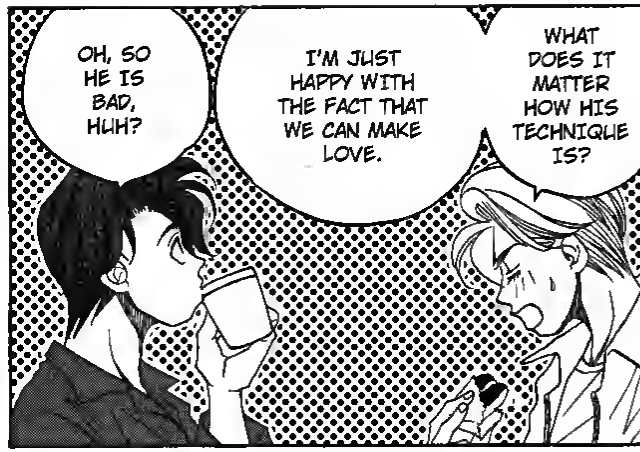
WHEN I WAS LIVING WITH MY PARENTS, I USED TO HAVE SOME ANIMALS AT HOME, BUT NOW THAT I'M LIVING IN AN APARTMENT I DON'T HAVE ANY PETS.

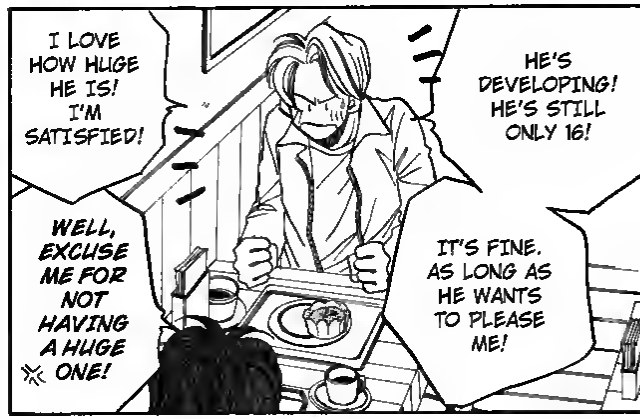
SOMETIMES, WHEN I GET THE FEELING THAT I REALLY WANT A PET, I GO AND LOOK AT THE PET SHOP...

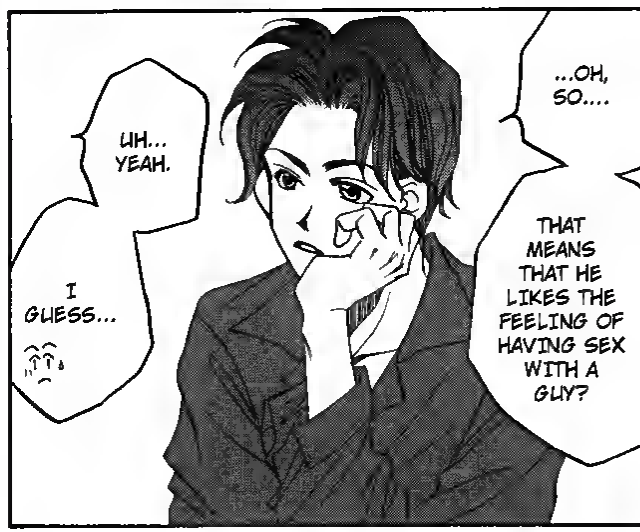
I'M NOT SURE IF A WOMAN WHO CAN BARELY TAKE CARE OF HERSELF CAN MAKE EVEN ONE ANIMAL HAPPY. MY SELF CONFIDENCE IS A BIT LACKING.

IF I BECOME AN ADULT WHO CAN AT LEAST LOOK AFTER MYSELF PROPERLY... THEN I SUPPOSE I'D WANT TO HAVE KIDS INSTEAD OF A PET...

BY THE WAY, NOW I WANT TO HAVE A RABBIT.




I LOVE HOW HUGE HE IS! I'M SATISFIED!
HE'S DEVELOPING! HE'S STILL ONLY 16!
WELL, EXCUSE ME FOR NOT HAVING A HUGE ONE!
IT'S FINE. AS LONG AS HE WANTS TO PLEASE ME!

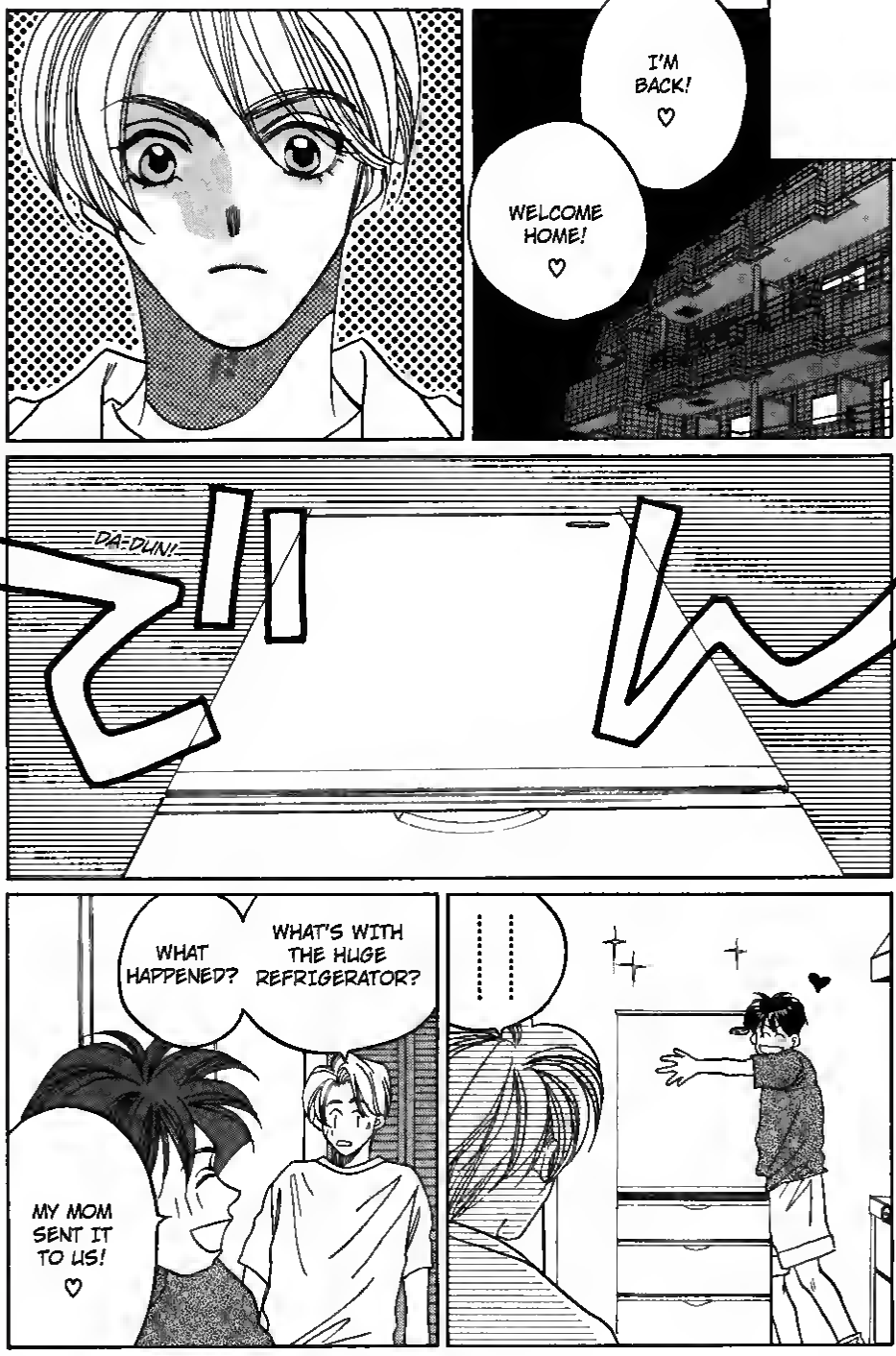


IT'S SOMEHOW DIFFERENT FOR ME, HUH?
I REALLY DO THINK OF HOW NICE GIRLS WITH BIG BREASTS ARE...
HE SAID IT WAS GROSS BEFORE WHEN HE DID IT WITH A GIRL.
REALLY?
BUT I DON'T KNOW.
HE MIGHT BE GENUINELY GAY...
YOU BRUTE!
BUT, I LOOK AT THE ANKLES TOO. ♡
RIGHT? ♡
I'VE NEVER GONE OUT WITH SOMEONE WHO LOOKED BAD.
I ONLY GO FOR LOOKS!
YOU'RE QUITE PICKY, TSUBAKI.
THEN HAIR AND ANKLES... AND WHITE SKIN...
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FACE FOR ME!
BREASTS, HUH?
WE CAN DO IT IF WE TRY!!
IT'S AMAZING! JUST NOW, WE WERE HAVING A PERFECTLY ORDINARY MALE CONVERSATION!!
WOW!
.....
.....

I REALLY MUST HAVE NOTHING TO DO...
TO GET SO EXCITED ABOUT THIS TOPIC...
SOME-HOW...
BUT I DON'T MEAN THAT KIND OF NOTHING TO DO...
AT A CONVENIENCE STORE.
I'M GOING TO BE STARTING TOMORROW.
OH.
YOU'VE REALLY GOT THAT MUCH FREE TIME?
AREN'T YOU WORKING?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE GONE SO LONG...
WITHOUT DATING ANYONE...
YOU'RE WITH ME RIGHT NOW, RIGHT?
I'M ALL ALONE.
THAT'S NOT IT EITHER...

CLATTER
カチャ
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
IT SHOULD BE ABOUT 30 MINUTES.
PIZZA-LE
AND YOU STICK THE PINK COPY ON TOP OF THE CUTTING BOARD.
CLICK CLICK
THE YELLOW COPY GOES OVER THERE...
SO, WHEN THE ORDER FORM COMES OUT...
MAKE SURE TO USE THE DRINKS THAT ARE ALREADY COLD FIRST.
WHEN YOU HAVE TIME, FOLD BOXES OR PUT UP FLIERS...
DOUBLE CHECK THE LANDMARKS AND STUFF...
SINCE YOU'LL PROBABLY GET LOST IN THE BEGINNING, HERE'S HOW TO REMEMBER THE ROUTE...

OH... I SEE.
IT'S OKAY! IT'S OKAY!
WE JUST WANT TO HAVE A REASON TO GO OUT AND DRINK!
TODAY, LET'S HAVE A WELCOME PARTY FOR KAORU!
GOOD IDEA! LET'S DO IT!
UH, THAT'S REALLY...
HEE HEE! THE MORE I SEE HIM, THE CUTER HE IS!
I WANT TO PUT HIM IN MY POCKET AND TAKE HIM HOME.
I'M OFF! I'LL DRIVE SAFELY!
YOU'RE IN A GREAT MOOD, MAHORIN.
DID SOME-THING GOOD HAPPEN?
SORT OF. ♡
LA LA LAAAA!
WELL, BACK TO WORK! BACK TO WORK! ♬ LA LA LA! ♬
PIZZA-LE
YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN THINGS WILL START GOING YOUR WAY AGAIN!


I'M BACK! ♡
WELCOME HOME! ♡
DA-DUN!
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHAT'S WITH THE HUGE REFRIGERATOR?
MY MOM SENT IT TO US! ♡

BEEP
BEEP BEEP
...OH, HELLO?
IT'S KOUTAROU. SORRY FOR NOT CALLING IN SO LONG.
BECAUSE ALL WE HAD UNTIL NOW WAS THE BUILT-IN MINI-FRIDGE.
IT HAS AN ICE MAKER TOO! ♡
NOW, YOU CAN REALLY STOCK UP ON INGREDIENTS, HUH? ♡
WE HAVE TO CALL AND THANK HER!
UM... THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE REFRIGERATOR!
YES.
YES!
I'LL TRY MY BEST TO KEEP COOKING WONDERFUL THINGS. ♡
PLEASE COME BY AGAIN, OKAY? ♡
HELLO, MOM?
THANKS! I WAS SO SURPRISED! ♡
HUH? OF COURSE, I'M ON TOP OF THINGS! I'M NOT A CHILD ANYMORE, YOU KNOW!
YEP! WE'RE HAVING FUN. KOU IS SO NICE... ♡
IT'S ALRIGHT! YEP, BYE! ♡
YOU'VE ACCEPTED US AS A COUPLE, RIGHT? ♡

I JUST GREETED HER CASUALLY!
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THAT BEFORE?!
THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?
IT'S EMBAR-RASSING!
TELL YOUR MOTHER ABOUT US, DID YOU?
...CHISATO, YOU DIDN'T...
CLATTER
♡ YEP!
WHY? WAS THAT BAD?
....."YEP♥"?
IT'S OKAY!
IT'S NOT A BAD THING, SO SHE UNDER-STANDS!
WHAT KIND OF FAMILY DO YOU HAVE?!
THAT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...
MMM!
YOUR MOM ASKED, "ARE YOU TAKING CARE OF CHISATO?"...
AND I ENTHUSIASTICALLY REPLIED, "YES!"
BUT THAT'S... NOT WHAT SHE MEANT BY "TAKING CARE OF"...
AW...
OH, SHE ASKED ME IF WE WERE HAVING SEX.
↑ OF COURSE, HE ANSWERED HONESTLY.

YOU'RE HUNGRY, RIGHT?
...I'VE GOTTA MAKE DINNER...
LATER.
DINNER CAN WAIT...
...BUT THIS WON'T WAIT...
ZIP
CHISATO,
DOES IT FEEL GOOD TO HAVE SEX WITH ME?
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME THAT?
IT FEELS GOOD.
SO VERY GOOD...

WELL, THAT WAS... BECAUSE...
...UM...
OH... THE TIME WITH CHIKA, HUH?
BUT WAIT...
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT AT FIRST.
SURELY, I DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW...
THE MESSY, DIRTY PARTS OF HER.
I THINK I ONLY WANTED TO SEE...
THE NORMAL, EASY-TO-GET-ALONG-WITH SIDE OF HER.
...I'M SHOWING YOU ALL OF ME...
RIGHT?
I'M LETTING YOU, RIGHT?
I WANT TO KNOW ALL OF YOU, KOU.
I WANT TO SEE ALL OF YOU.
SO, THAT WAS IT.
...HM.

THERE'S NOTHING...
MORE THAN THIS...
DEEPER...
I WANT TO SEE...
EVEN DEEPER INTO YOU.
DOES IT FEEL GOOD TO HAVE SEX WITH ME?
KOU...
I'M GLAD. ♡
.....
.....
YEP...

SHIROKIYA, AGAIN?
WHAT ARE WE DOING? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
KAORU, ARE YOU OKAY WITH THAT?
UH, YEAH...
OH, I SHOULD GIVE HIM A CALL JUST IN CASE...
THE SIGNAL'S FLASHING!
RUN, RUN!
GRAB!

HURRY!
THE LIGHT'S GOING TO CHANGE!
MAHORIN, YOU SLOW-POKE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
AH... IT TURNED RED...
BAM!
GO ON AHEAD!

CHEERS!
UH, YES.
LET'S WORK HARD FROM NOW ON!
WELL THEN KAORU,
WHERE ARE YOU FROM KAORU?
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
...UH...
TAKASAKI...
TAKASAKI?
YEP!
IBARAKI PREFECTURE, HUH?
YOU IDIOT, IT'S TOCHIGI!
...NO, IT'S GUNMA, ACTUALLY...
TAKASAKI, HUH?
WHAT'S TAKASAKI FAMOUS FOR?
UM... DARUMA DOLLS...
WHAT ELSE?
...UH... DARUMA LUNCH BOXES...
ONLY DARUMA, HUH?

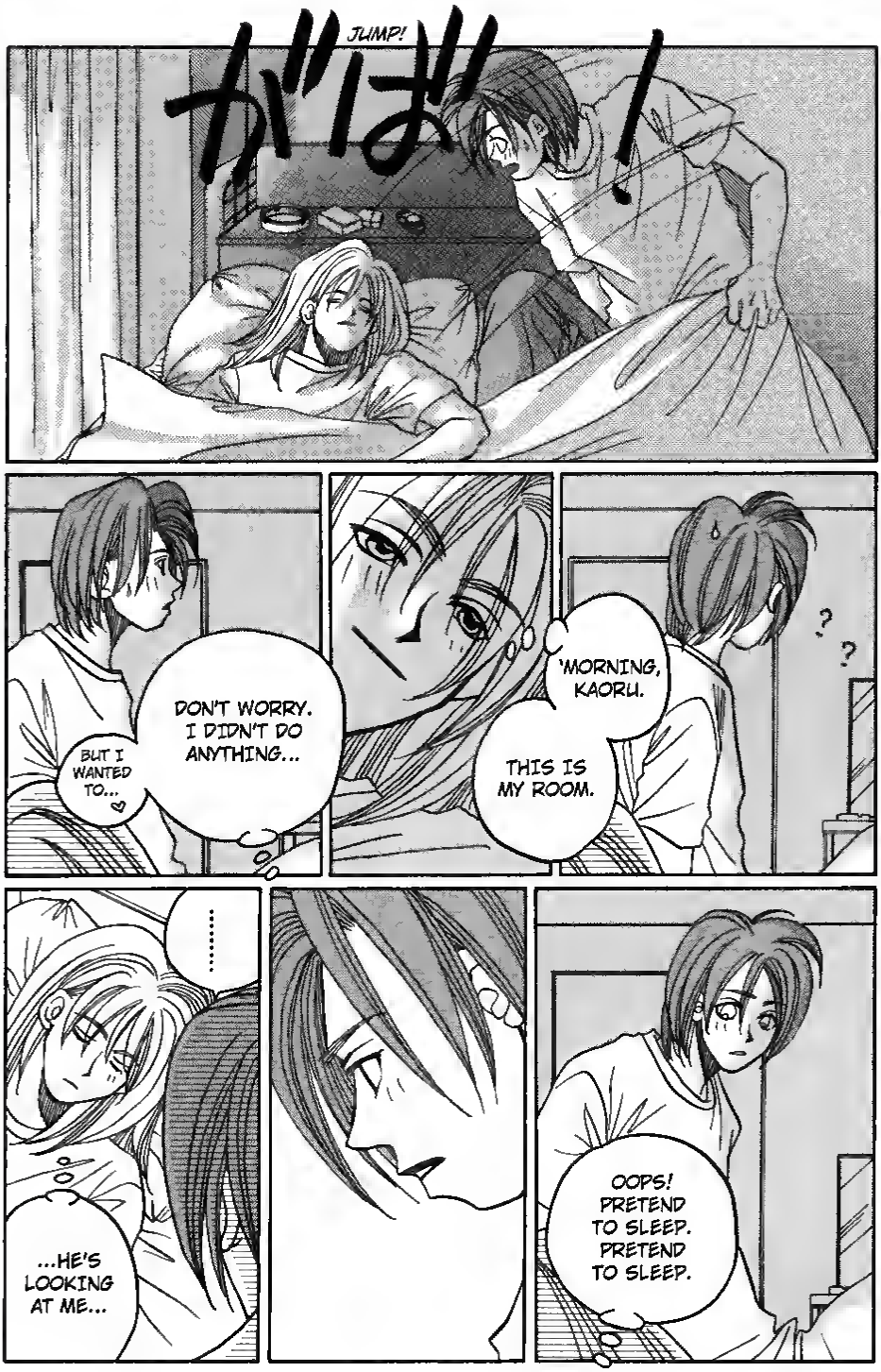
WAY TO GO!!
LIVING WITH YOUR GIRL-FRIEND?!
N-NO!
SO, ARE YOU LIVING ALONE?
UH... NOPE.
I'M LIVING WITH SOMEONE RIGHT NOW...
WHAT ARE YOU, KAORU? GAY?
TWO GUYS LIVING TOGETHER, HUH?
HA HA HA
THAT AGAIN...
IT'S A GUY!
HE'S A FRIEND FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL...
THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL!!

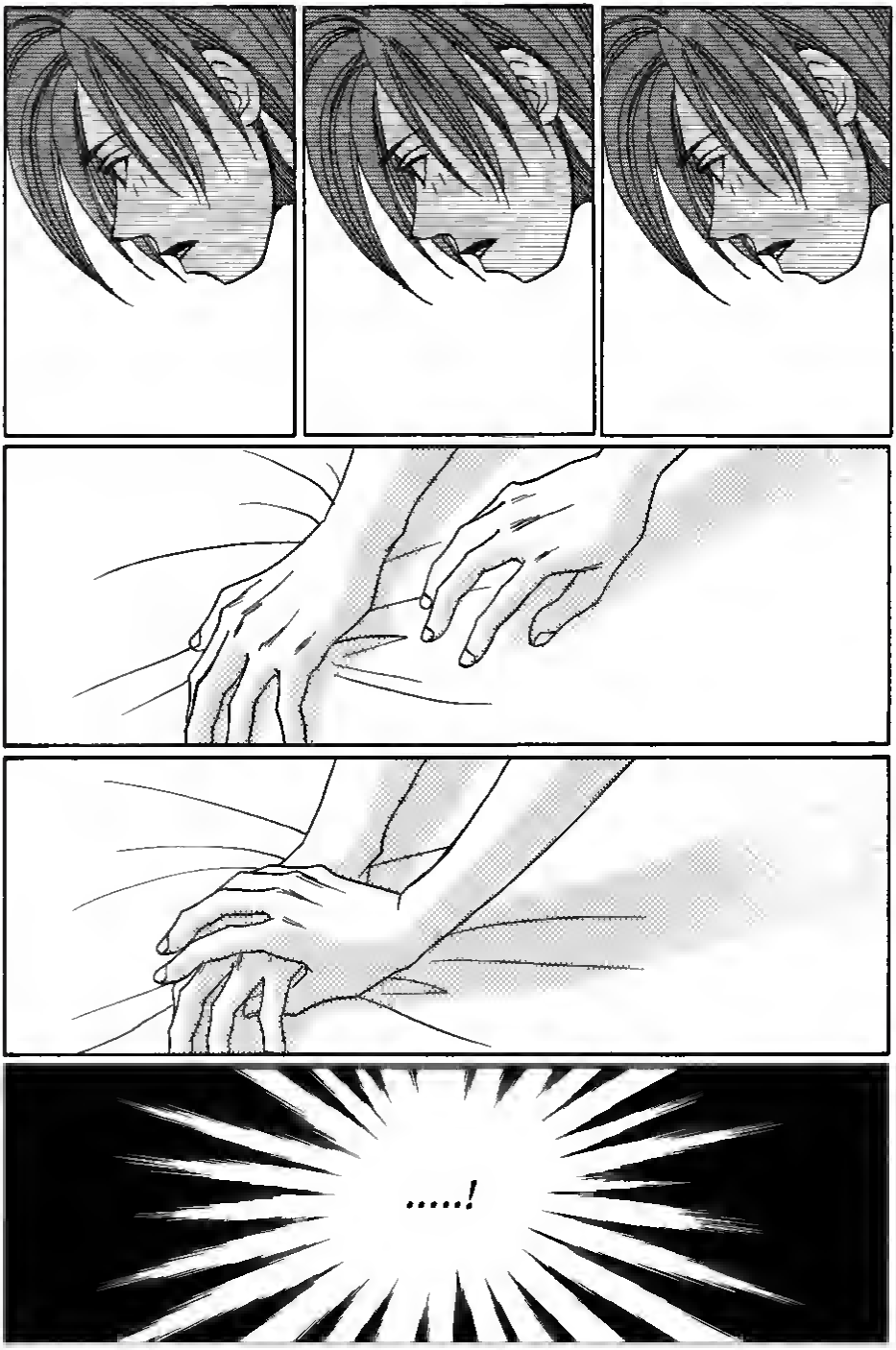
.....
.....
.....
I'M THE ONE WHO'S GAY!
QUIT IT, TSUCHIYA!
.....
HOW RUDE! PLEASE CALL ME THE WOLF-MAN!
THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF!
CLAMOR
CLAMOR
SIGH... LONELY...
LIKE I SAID, SHE'S A FRIEND.
TRUE.
YOUR GIRL-FRIEND'S A MODEL, RIGHT?
GIVE ME A BREAK, MAHORI.
I JUST SAID SHE'S A FRIEND.
TRUE.
SHE'S A REALLY GORGEOUS WOMAN!
I'VE SEEN HER!
GIVE ME A BREAK.
NOTHING BUT LIES.
EH HEM!
I SWEAR I'VE NEVER FOOLED AROUND WITH HER!
TRUE.

MY FACE IS ALREADY GETTING RED.
IT'S TRUE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THAT'S TRUE.
UH... I'M FINE.
DO YOU WANT SAKE INSTEAD?
NO... I CAN'T DRINK ANYMORE...
GLUG
GLUG
IT'S CUTE.
HEY, CAN I ORDER CHILI SHRIMP?
OH, I'LL HAVE A JUMBO POT-STICKER.
KAORU, WHAT DO YOU...
...HUH?
GULP
GULP
GULP
.....

...HE ACTUALLY PASSED OUT...
KAORU, YOU OKAY?
...I GUESS I'LL GO TO BED...
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M HIS WIFE.
DAMMIT...
WHAT'S KAORU DOING?
HE COULD AT LEAST CALL IF HE'S GOING TO BE OUT LATE...

……
ぎゅ
SQUEEZE


JUMP!
がばっ!
DON'T WORRY. I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING...
BUT I WANTED TO...
'MORNING, KAORU.
THIS IS MY ROOM.
?
?
.....
...HE'S LOOKING AT ME...
OOPS! PRETEND TO SLEEP. PRETEND TO SLEEP.



BLINK!
ぱっ!
KAORU?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING...
I WONDER IF...
I'M GETTING LUCKY AT LAST!

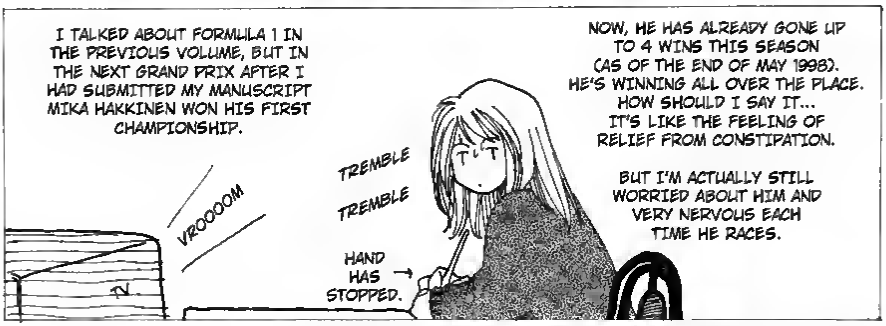
CHAPTER 26: MAHORIN'S HONORABLE DEFEAT

DOUSEI AI

LOVE UNDER ONE ROOF

SOMEONE TAKE ME...

TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT SUMMER RIVER BANK...


I TALKED ABOUT FORMULA 1 IN THE PREVIOUS VOLUME, BUT IN THE NEXT GRAND PRIX AFTER I HAD SUBMITTED MY MANUSCRIPT MIKA HAKKINEN WON HIS FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP.
VROOOOM
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
HAND HAS STOPPED.
NOW, HE HAS ALREADY GONE UP TO 4 WINS THIS SEASON (AS OF THE END OF MAY 1998). HE'S WINNING ALL OVER THE PLACE. HOW SHOULD I SAY IT... IT'S LIKE THE FEELING OF RELIEF FROM CONSTIPATION.
BUT I'M ACTUALLY STILL WORRIED ABOUT HIM AND VERY NERVOUS EACH TIME HE RACES.

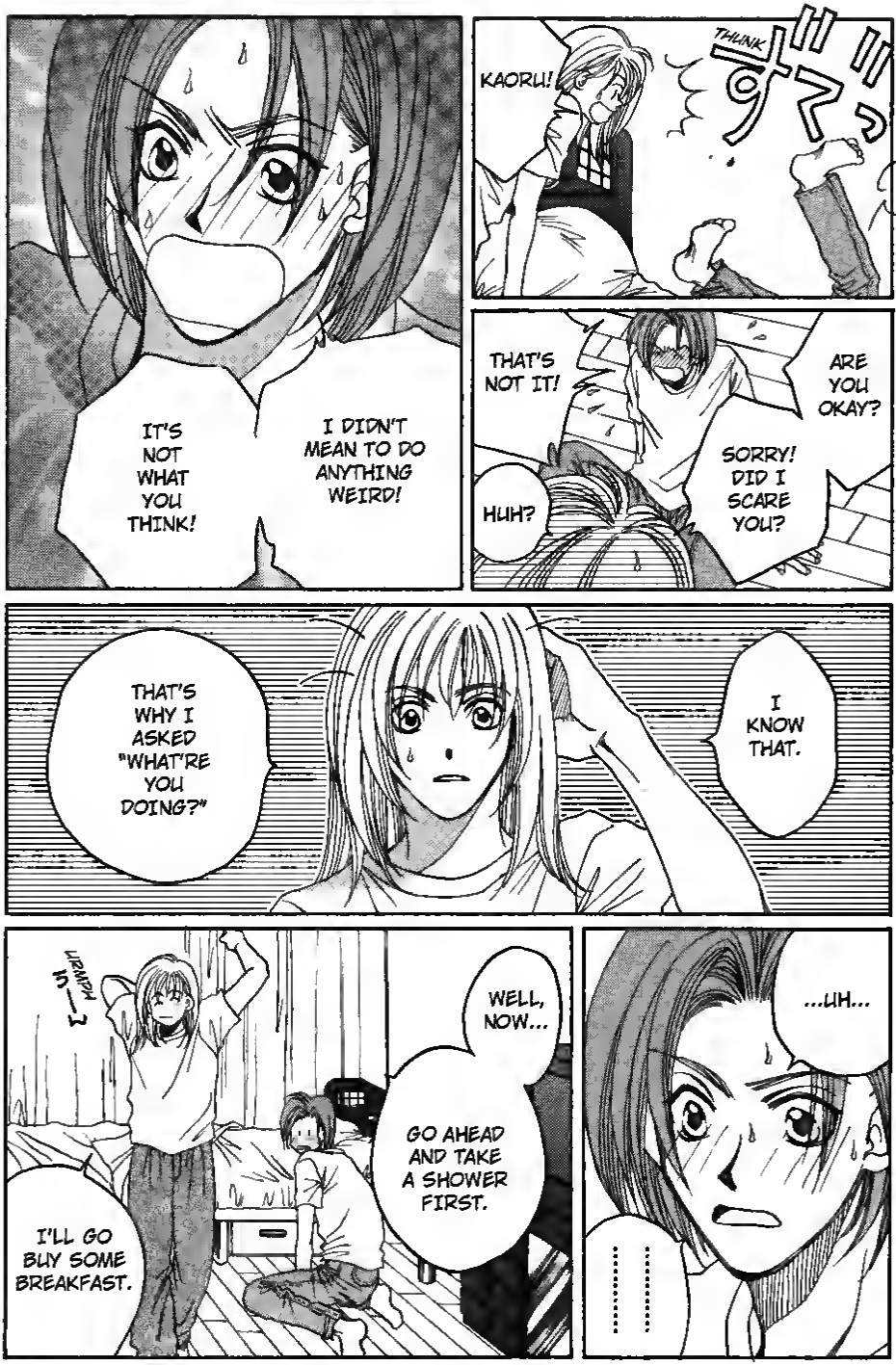
THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO EVERYONE WHO SENT ME PHOTOS OF MIKA. I AM CAREFULLY STORING THEM. AND ALSO, GAZING AT THEM OFTEN (LAUGHS).

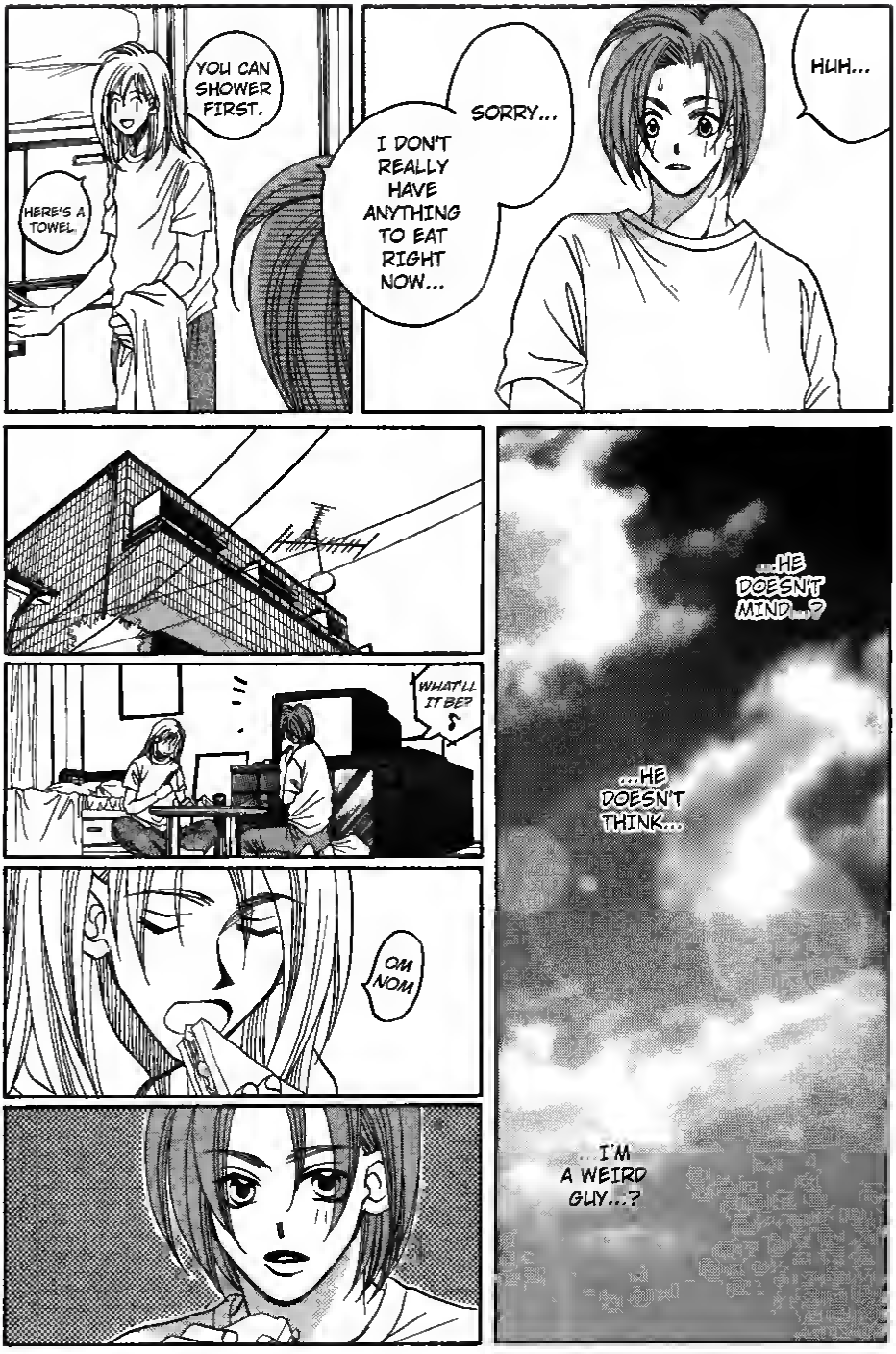
JUMP!
カリはぃ!!

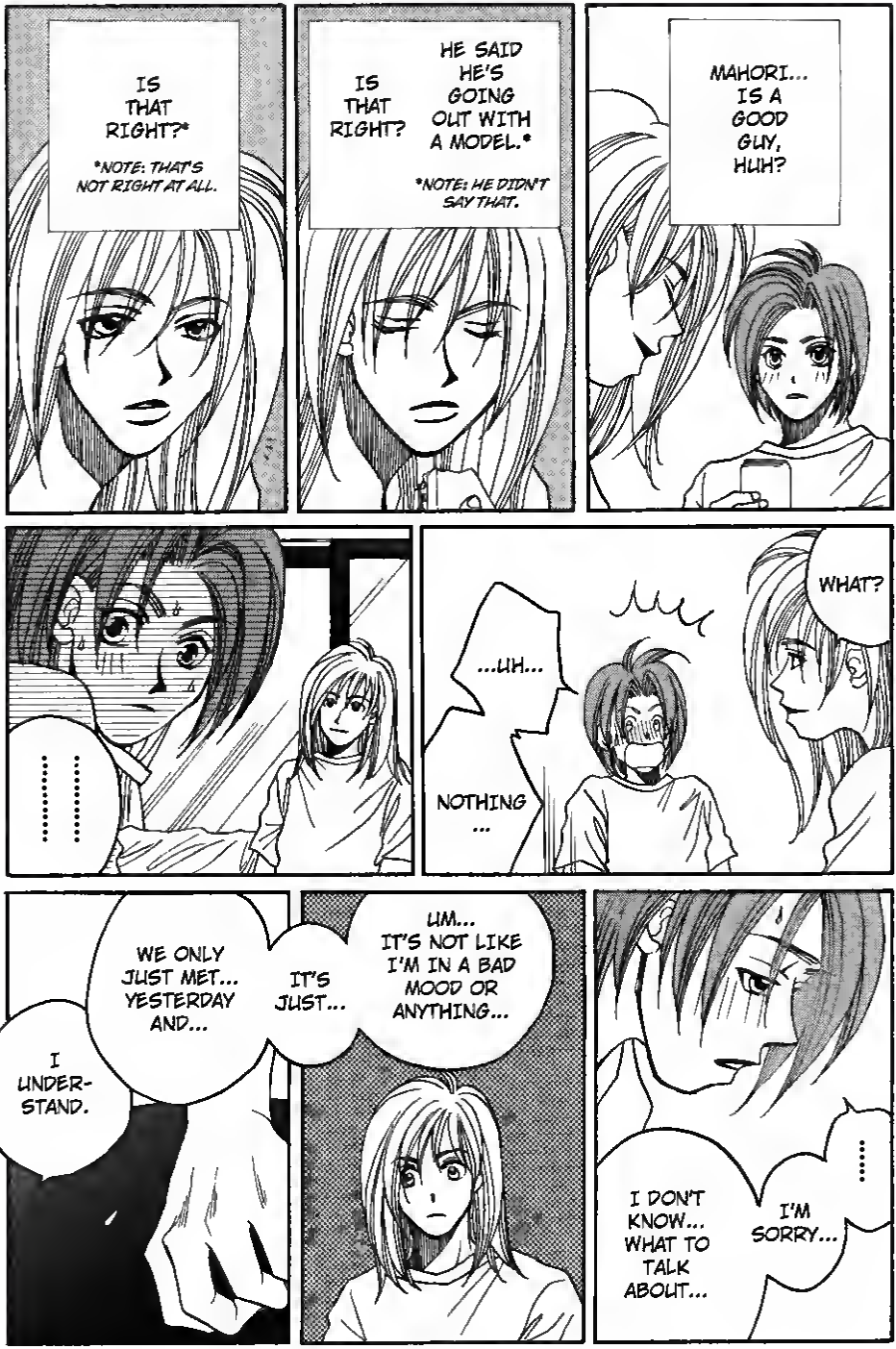
MAHORI'S ROOM... HUH?
THAT'S RIGHT. I JUST PASSED OUT THERE...
HOW EMBARRASSING
...BUT I CAN'T DRINK A LOT...
I LIKE ALCOHOL...

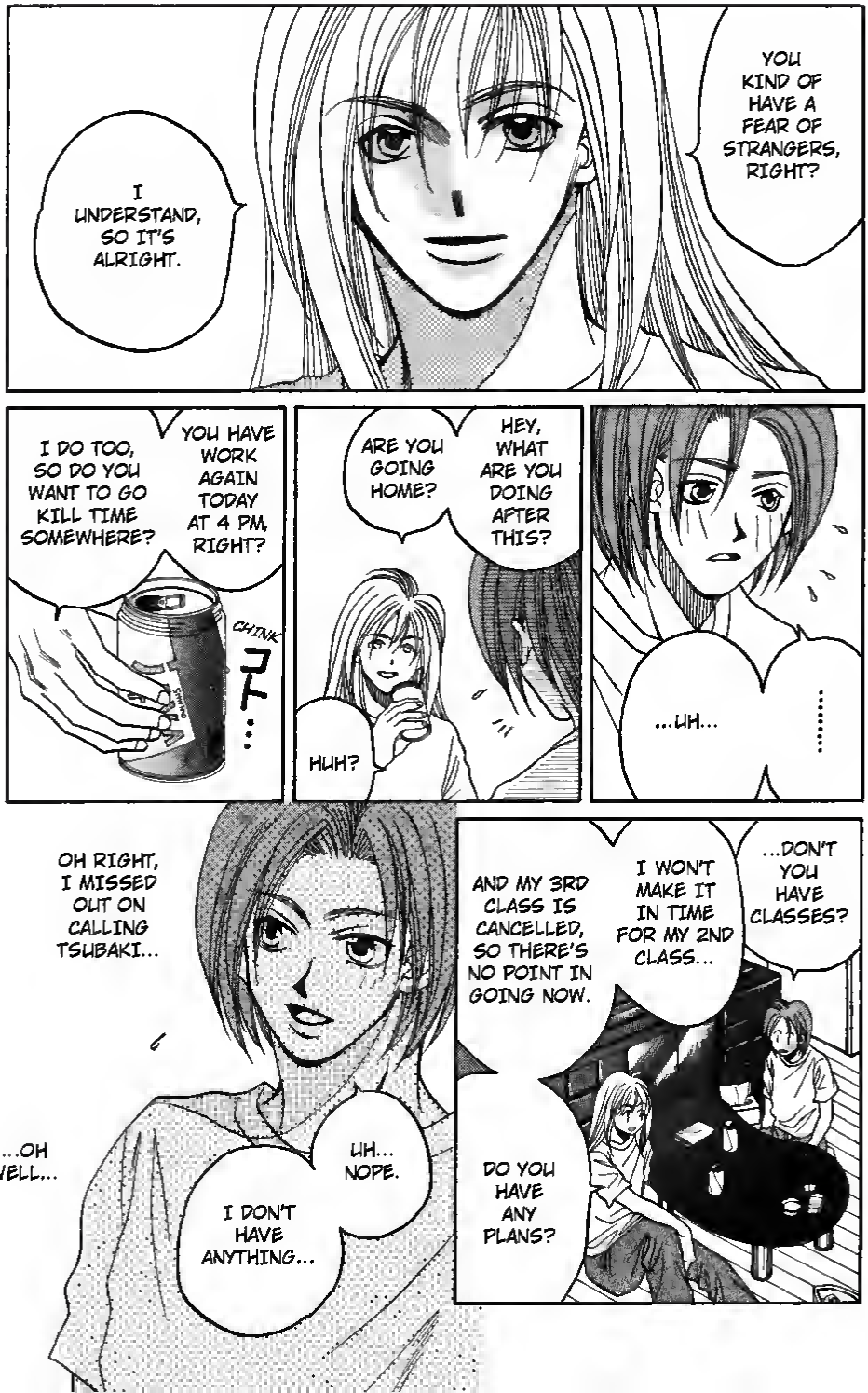
WHEN HE TOUCHED ME...
IT WASN'T UNPLEASANT AT ALL...
...SINCE THAT TIME WITH TSUBAKI...
OH, YEAH...
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN...
SINCE THAT HAPPENED? IT SEEMS LIKE FOREVER...
SSF...
TREMBLE TREMBLE
OR MAYBE...
WAS IT... JUST BY CHANCE?
I WONDER... WHY...

BLINK!
ぱちっ!
KAORU?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING...
GAH...!
.....


KAORU!
THUNK
ずきっ
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO ANYTHING WEIRD!
THAT'S NOT IT!
ARE YOU OKAY?
HUH?
SORRY! DID I SCARE YOU?
THAT'S WHY I ASKED "WHAT'RE YOU DOING?"
I KNOW THAT.
WELL, NOW...
GO AHEAD AND TAKE A SHOWER FIRST.
I'LL GO BUY SOME BREAKFAST.
...UH...


HERE'S A TOWEL.
YOU CAN SHOWER FIRST.
I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT RIGHT NOW...
SORRY...
HUH...
WHAT'LL IT BE?
OM NOM
...HE DOESN'T MIND...?
...HE DOESN'T THINK...
...I'M A WEIRD GUY...?


IS THAT RIGHT?*
*NOTE: THAT'S NOT RIGHT AT ALL.
IS THAT RIGHT?
HE SAID HE'S GOING OUT WITH A MODEL.*
*NOTE: HE DIDN'T SAY THAT.
MAHORI... IS A GOOD GUY, HUH?
.....
...UH...
NOTHING ...
WHAT?
I UNDER-STAND.
WE ONLY JUST MET... YESTERDAY AND...
IT'S JUST...
UM... IT'S NOT LIKE I'M IN A BAD MOOD OR ANYTHING...
I DON'T KNOW... WHAT TO TALK ABOUT...
.....
I'M SORRY...


YOU KIND OF HAVE A FEAR OF STRANGERS, RIGHT?
I UNDERSTAND, SO IT'S ALRIGHT.
YOU HAVE WORK AGAIN TODAY AT 4 PM, RIGHT?
I DO TOO, SO DO YOU WANT TO GO KILL TIME SOMEWHERE?
CHINK
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER THIS?
ARE YOU GOING HOME?
HUH?
...UH...
...DON'T YOU HAVE CLASSES?
I WON'T MAKE IT IN TIME FOR MY 2ND CLASS...
AND MY 3RD CLASS IS CANCELLED, SO THERE'S NO POINT IN GOING NOW.
DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS?
OH RIGHT, I MISSED OUT ON CALLING TSUBAKI...
UH... NOPE.
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING...
...OH WELL...

MAN, WHAT THE HELL?!
I MEAN IT'S FINE, BUT... AT LEAST CALL...
.....
THAT JERK...
KAORU WASN'T BACK THIS MORNING, AND HE'S NOT EVEN BACK DURING THE DAY!
.....
DAMMIT!
WHAM

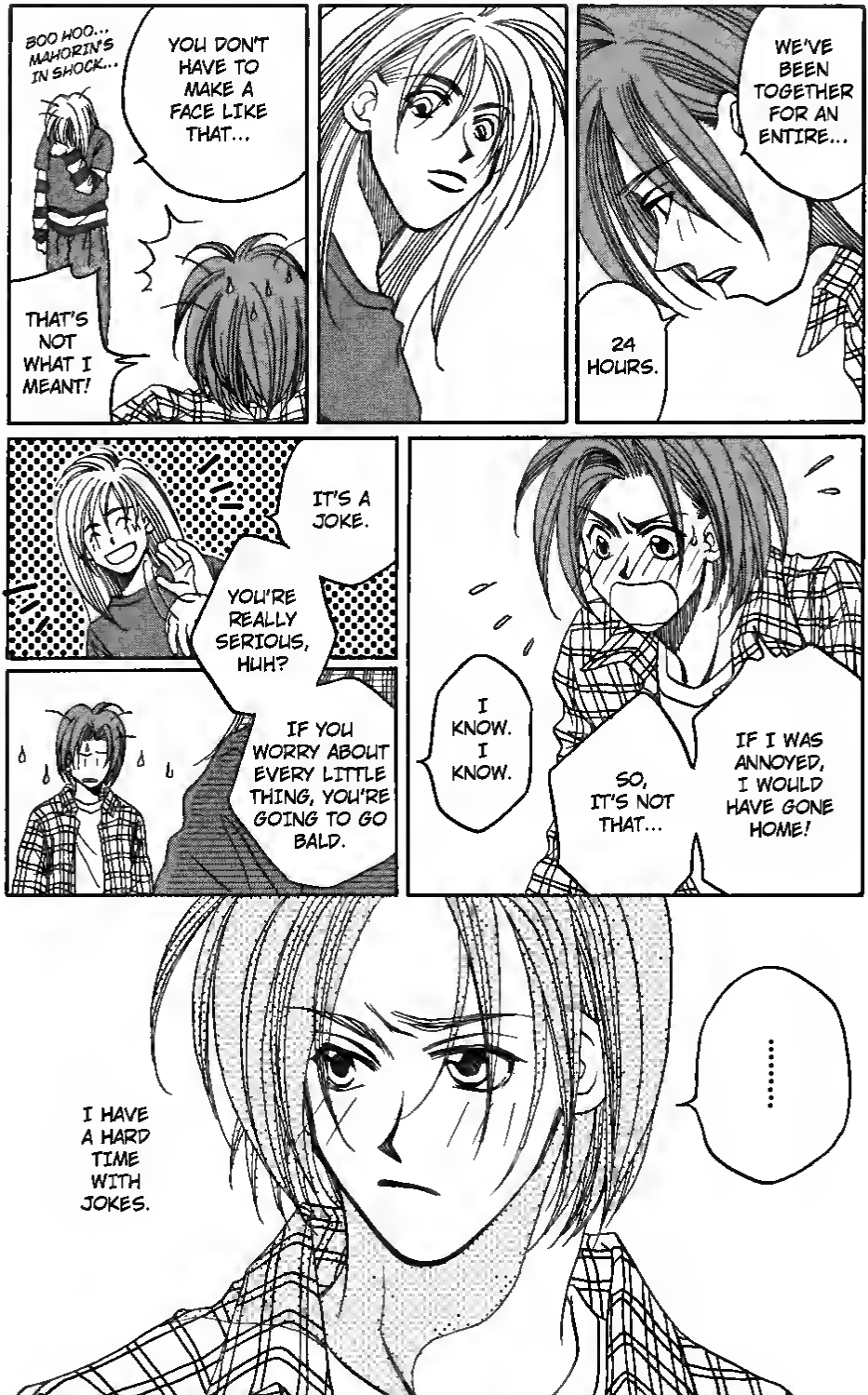
DAMMIT...
IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE I'VE DONE THIS!
IF YOU'RE OVER 5' 5", THAT PASSES AS AN ADULT!
I'M NOT SMALL!
CLATTER
NO, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT HEIGHT...
HUH?
.....
HOW DID YOU GET SO SMALL?
KAORU,

YEAH...
I HAD ASTHMA...
YOU WERE SICKLY?
SIT
LISTEN TO ME...
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT YOUR HEIGHT ...
ACTUALLY, I WONDER IF IT'S BECAUSE I WAS SICKLY AS A CHILD THAT I DIDN'T GET TALL...
IT WENT AWAY A LONG TIME AGO, SO IT'S ALRIGHT.
AND MY ROOMMATE SMOKES LIKE A FIEND TOO...
IT'S OKAY.
OH...
UH, SORRY.
...BUT...
BUT...
AND I STOPPED HAVING ATTACKS.
BY THE TIME I ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL IT HAD GONE AWAY...
ASTHMA CAN GO AWAY?
IT DEPENDS ON THE PERSON...
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE I HAD CHILD-HOOD ASTHMA.

BUT I'M STILL SICK.
.....
IF YOU...
IF YOU HAD AN ILLNESS THAT YOU WOULDN'T WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT...
THEN YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO BE TOLD YOU HAD IT, RIGHT?

...BUT...
I'D RATHER THINK THAT'S NOT THE CASE...
I KNOW THAT... ALREADY...
IT WON'T GET BETTER.
YOU MEAN YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO GET BETTER?
HUH?
WELL, THAT'S...
KIND OF ANNOYING...
IF IT WERE ME, I'D FIND SOME BUDDIES WITH THE SAME ILLNESS...
AND WE'D LIVE IT UP UNTIL WE DIE!
WHAT A WASTE OF LIFE!

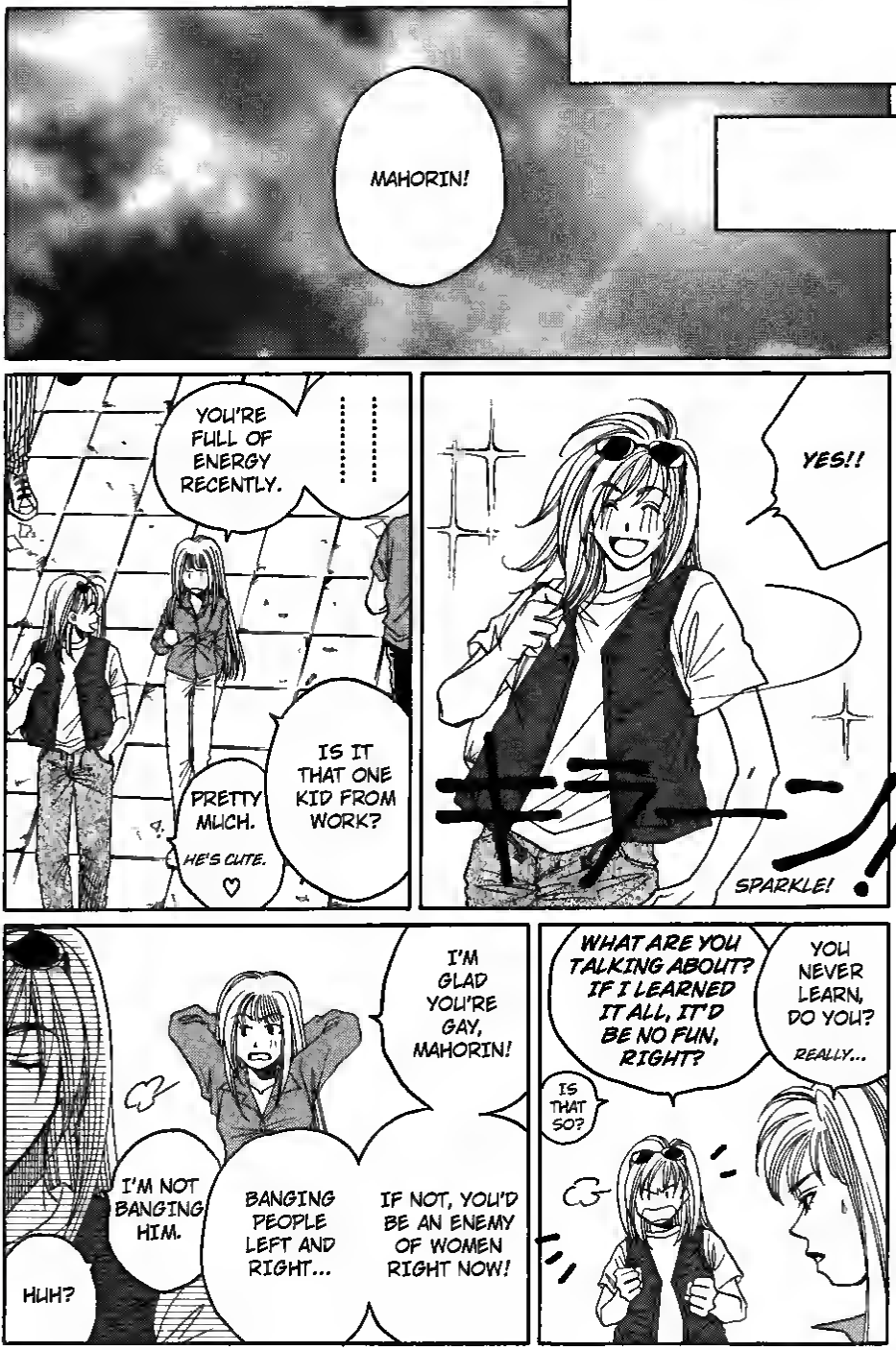
HUH...
I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT...
.....
...BUDDIES ...
KAORU,
THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF GUYS.
COME ON! DON'T BE ASHAMED!
NO! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!
YOU WANNA MEET SOME PEOPLE AT THE HOSPITAL?
PAT
LET'S GET GOING.
IT'S ALMOST 4 O'CLOCK.

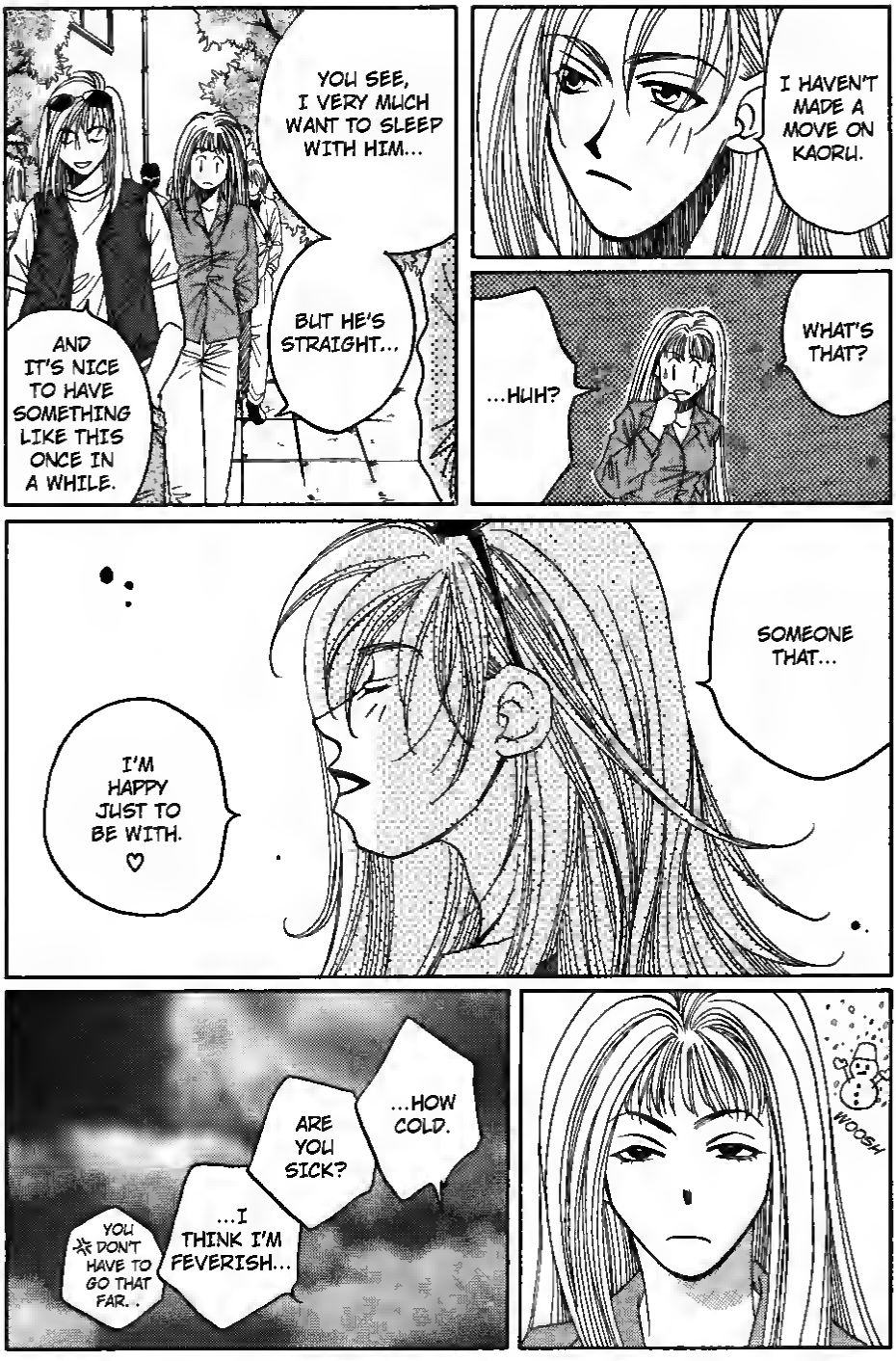

BOO HOO... MAHORIN'S IN SHOCK...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE A FACE LIKE THAT...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR AN ENTIRE...
24 HOURS.
IT'S A JOKE.
YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS, HUH?
IF YOU WORRY ABOUT EVERY LITTLE THING, YOU'RE GOING TO GO BALD.
I KNOW. I KNOW.
SO, IT'S NOT THAT...
IF I WAS ANNOYED, I WOULD HAVE GONE HOME!
I HAVE A HARD TIME WITH JOKES.
.....

CLICK
THEY JUST CALMLY HURT...
PEOPLE'S SINCERITY.
I'M HOME...
.....
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR OWN EMOTIONS.
CLICK
WELCOME HOME.
I'M OFF TO WORK. IT'S THE LATE SHIFT, SO I'LL BE BACK IN THE MORNING.
GOOD NIGHT.
FROM: TSUBAKI
NOW TO FIND THE EVIDENCE!!
BANG
ROLL

AND TALKED ABOUT SOME STRANGE THINGS.
WE ATE THREE MEALS TOGETHER...
...I SLEPT IN THE SAME BED WITH SOMEONE I JUST MET...
WHAT AM I THINKING ABOUT?
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!
WHAM
MAHORI HAS A BEAUTIFUL BODY, DOESN'T HE?
WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF MUSCLE...

HUH?
.....
.....
YOU'RE AN IDIOT, KAORU!!
IF YOU'RE GOING TO STAY OUT ALL NIGHT, AT LEAST CALL!!
FROM: TSUBAKI!!
.....
RUSTLE
SO, HE...
REALLY IS ANGRY AFTER ALL...


MAHORIN!
YOU'RE FULL OF ENERGY RECENTLY.
.....
IS IT THAT ONE KID FROM WORK?
PRETTY MUCH.
HE'S CUTE.
YES!!
SPARKLE!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE GAY, MAHORIN!
IF NOT, YOU'D BE AN ENEMY OF WOMEN RIGHT NOW!
BANGING PEOPLE LEFT AND RIGHT...
I'M NOT BANGING HIM.
HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IF I LEARNED IT ALL, IT'D BE NO FUN, RIGHT?
YOU NEVER LEARN, DO YOU?
REALLY...
IS THAT SO?


YOU SEE, I VERY MUCH WANT TO SLEEP WITH HIM...
BUT HE'S STRAIGHT...
AND IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS ONCE IN A WHILE.
I HAVEN'T MADE A MOVE ON KAORU.
WHAT'S THAT?
...HUH?
SOMEONE THAT...
I'M HAPPY JUST TO BE WITH. ♡
...HOW COLD.
ARE YOU SICK?
...I THINK I'M FEVERISH...
YOU ✲ DON'T HAVE TO GO THAT FAR..
WOOSH

SHUNK
GOOD MORNING.
I'M OFF TO WORK. I MIGHT STAY OUT TONIGHT.
MAKE SURE TO EAT SOMETHING OTHER THAN INSTANT NOODLES.
FROM: KAORU
IT'S CLOSE... AND IT'S NICE AND COZY...
IT'S FINE.
IT'S MORE FUN WHEN SOMEONE'S THERE.
...SORRY, SOMEHOW...
IT SEEMS LIKE I'M ALWAYS HANGING OUT AT YOUR PLACE.

《 KAORU EBATA 》

BIRTHDAY: MAY 6TH

BLOOD TYPE: A

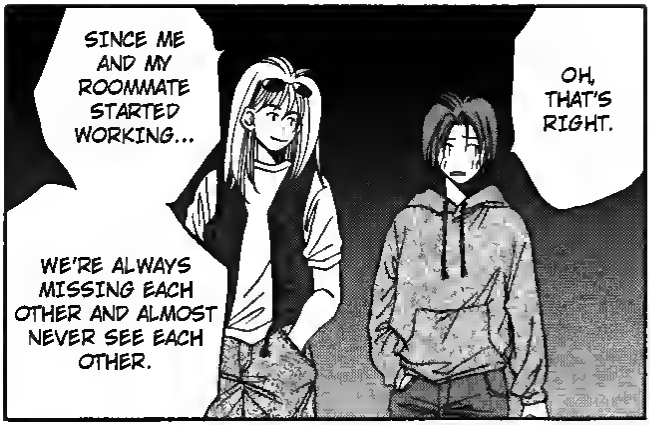
HEIGHT: 5' 5"

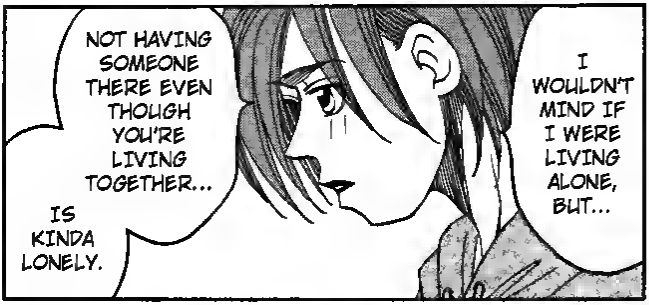
WEIGHT: 115 POUNDS

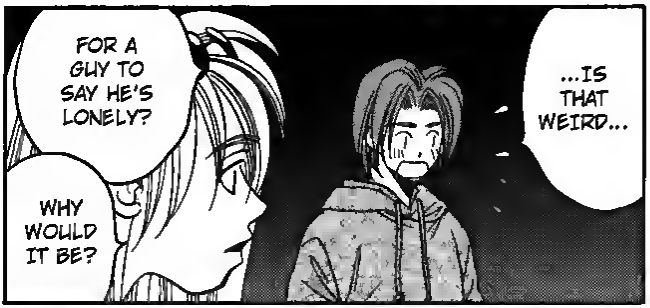
SHOE SIZE: 7

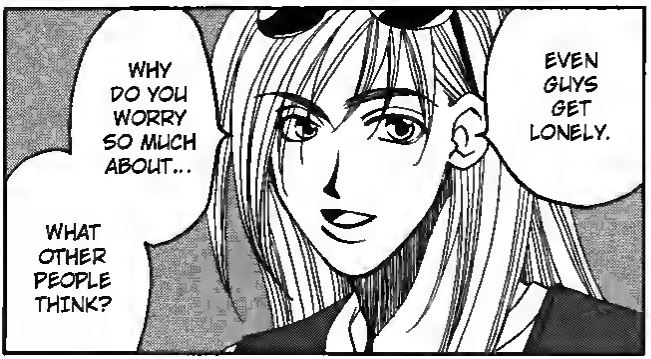
FAMILY: FATHER, MOTHER, AND TWO OLDER BROTHERS

BIRTHPLACE: TAKASAKI, GUNMA PREFECTURE









PEOPLE ARE NEAR ME...
SO, I WORRY...
I WORRY.
I'LL PUT THIS IN THE FRIDGE.
THANK YOU.
I'LL GO STRAIGHTEN UP THE BATHROOM.
OKAY.
HELLO! IT'S MAHORIN!
OH.
RRRR
RRRR
RRRR

IT'S ME...
TOMOYUKI...
MAHORIN...
COME ON AND LEAVE ME AN ENERGETIC MESSAGE!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOUR CALL!
WHAT A MESSAGE...
BEEP
!!
SORRY... FOR CALLING.
IT ANNOYS YOU, RIGHT?
FOR YOU, IT WAS JUST FOOLING AROUND FOR ONE NIGHT, BUT FOR ME...
I WAS SERIOUS...
BUT I CAN'T FORGET.
I'M SORRY...
TO BE SUCH A BOTHER.

BEEP
I'M SORRY... I WON'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS ANYMORE.
I JUST WANTED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE ONE MORE TIME.
...THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES...
GOODBYE, MAHORIN.

Ha Ha Ha!!
THAT GUY LOVES PRANKS! THIS ONE WAS IN POOR TASTE THOUGH, HUH?
OH! THAT MUST BE IT!
...HE SAID "MAHORIN"...
MUST BE A... WRONG NUMBER...
...H- HOW EMBAR- RASSING...
.....
.....
ばっ!!

IT'S JUST I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO SAY IT... I JUST COULDN'T SAY IT...
I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO KEEP IT FROM YOU.
A GUY WHO'S ONLY INTERESTED IN GUYS!
I AM...
IT'S JUST... WELL...
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T TELL YOU... AND IN NO WAY DID I INTEND TO TRICK YOU...

WELL...
TO BE HONEST...
I LIKE YOU, SO...
BUT...
I NEVER TOUCHED YOU, SO..
BLUSH
YOU DID TOUCH ME!!

I'M GOING HOME!
JUST SOMETHING PEOPLE DO WHEN THEY'RE TOGETHER...
TH-THAT WAS...
HUH?
YOU HELD MY HAND, DIDN'T YOU?!
GRAB
WAIT A SEC...
KAORU!
BA-DUM

BAM!
DON'T TOUCH ME!
SMASH
KAORU!!

...UH...
SLAM!
...AN HONORABLE DEFEAT...

CHAPTER 27: MAHORIN'S BIG REVERSAL

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

RECENTLY, WATCHING A CERTAIN COMIC DUO'S PROGRAM, I THOUGHT, "SOMEHOW IT'S LACKING A BIT THESE DAYS. I WONDER WHY?" I THINK MAYBE THEY'RE JUST CONTINUING TO DO WHAT COMES NATURALLY TO THEM. EVEN SO, OF COURSE THE GUESTS WERE LAUGHING...

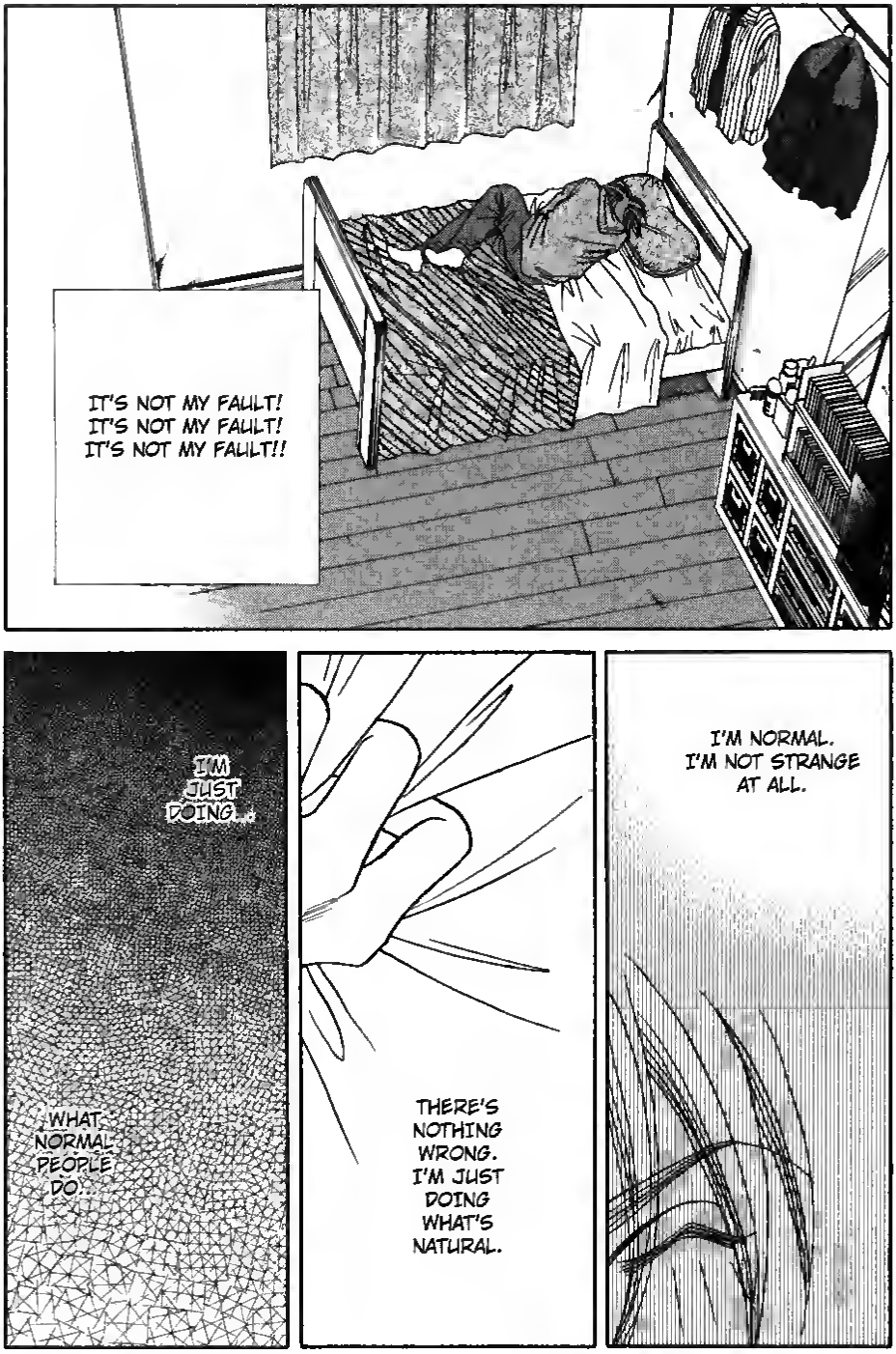
HAND HAS STOPPED.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, I REALIZED THAT I CAN ONLY DO WHAT COMES NATURALLY TO ME AS WELL. DRAWING PICTURES THAT COME NATURALLY. WRITING STORIES THAT COME NATURALLY. ADDITIONALLY, I WORRY THAT I CONTINUE TO DRAW CHARACTERS THAT COME NATURALLY.

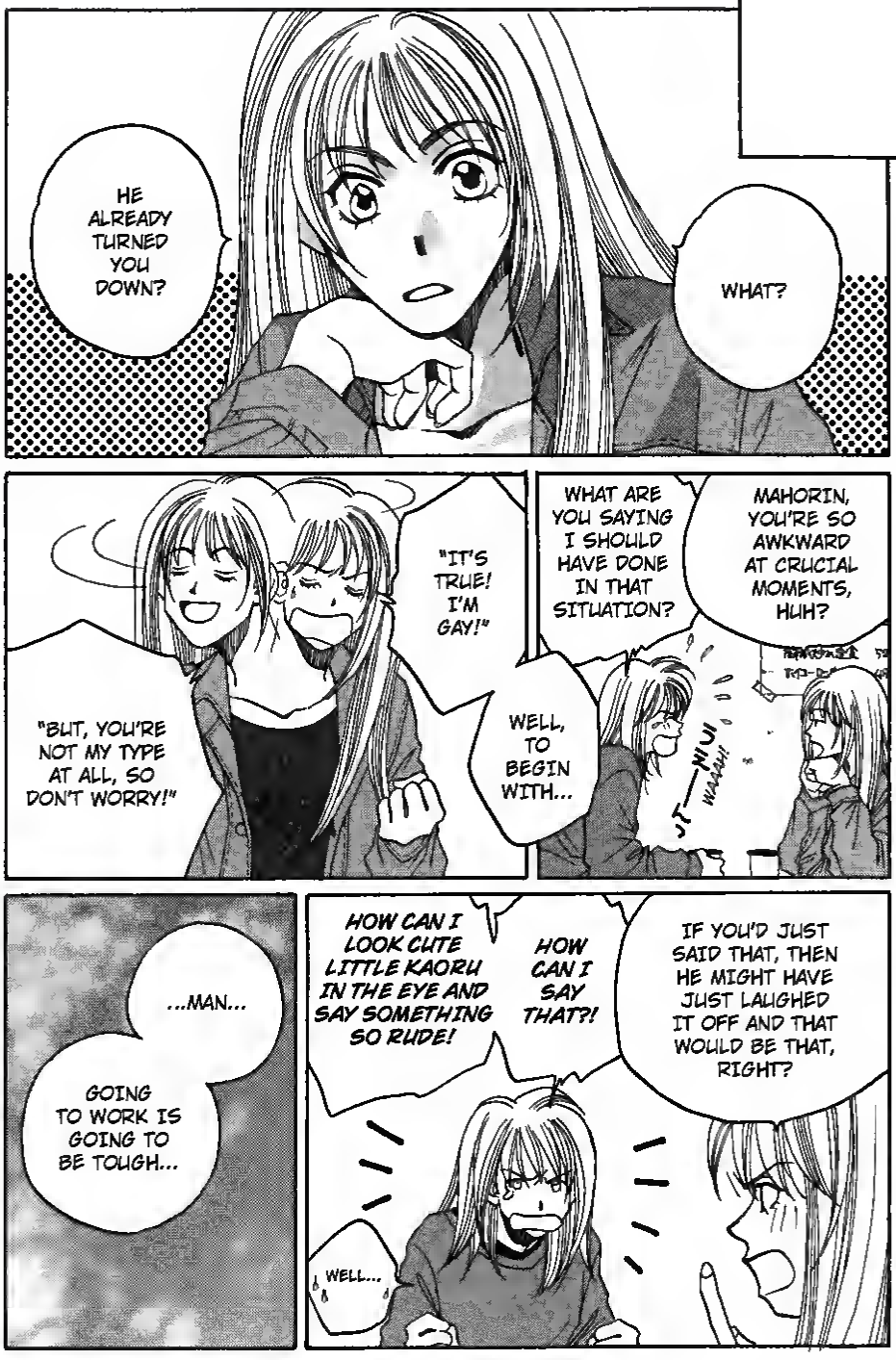
IT'S BAD TO DEPEND TOO MUCH ON YOUR WAY OF LIFE! I'VE LEARNED SOMETHING ONCE AGAIN. THANK YOU _____. THEY'RE ALL BLANKS FILLED WITH GRATITUDE.

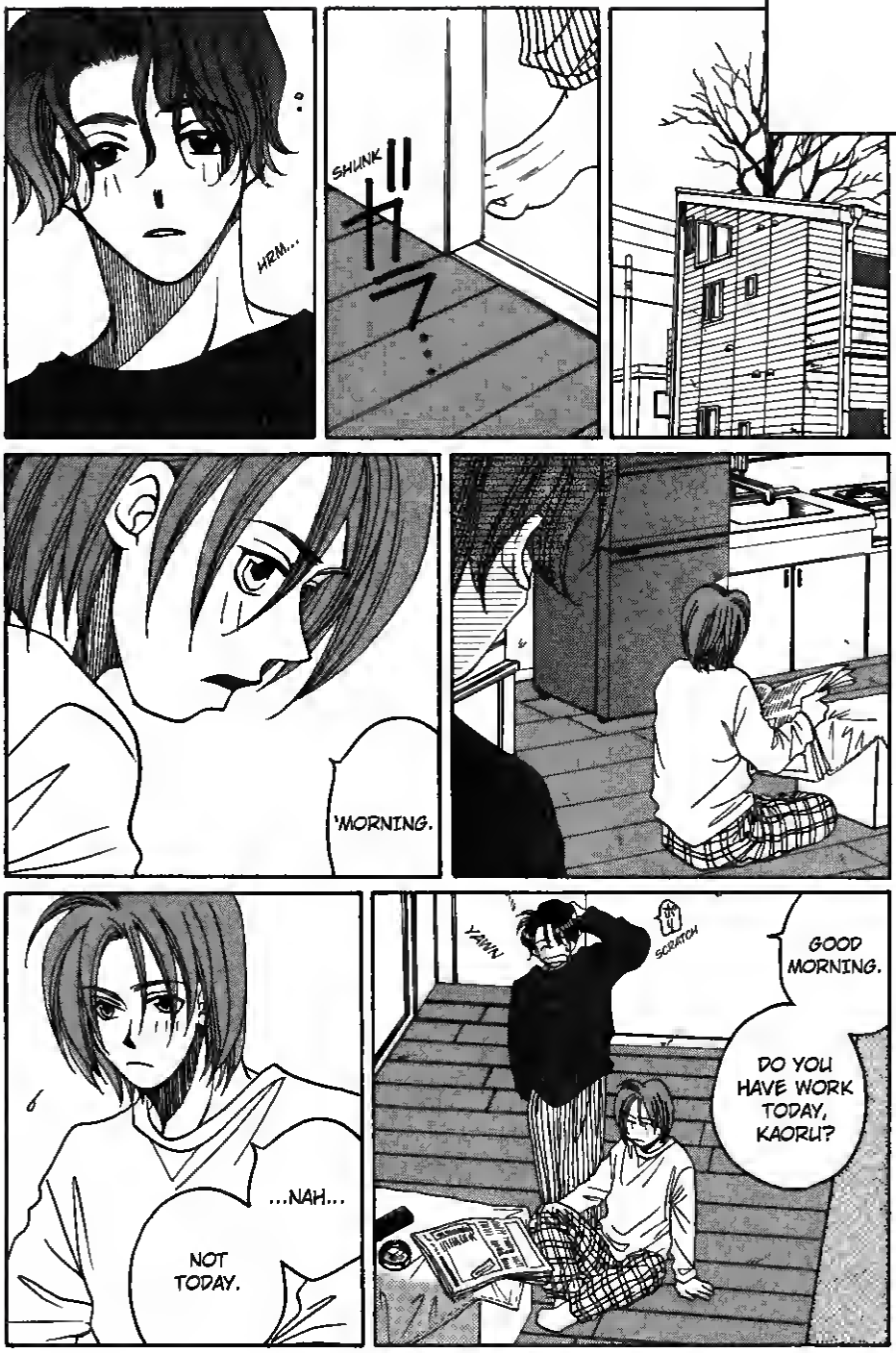
FLUTTER
ぱさ…
WHAM
がばん
…ぼれ…
FWUMP
I DID IT AGAIN.

I PUSHED SOMEONE AWAY WITH ALL MY MIGHT...
JUST LIKE FIVE YEARS AGO...
AND HURT HIM.
GRR
ぎゅ…


IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT!!
I'M JUST DOING...
WHAT NORMAL PEOPLE DO...
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG. I'M JUST DOING WHAT'S NATURAL.
I'M NORMAL. I'M NOT STRANGE AT ALL.

バタン
CLUNK


HE ALREADY TURNED YOU DOWN?
WHAT?
"IT'S TRUE! I'M GAY!"
"BUT, YOU'RE NOT MY TYPE AT ALL, SO DON'T WORRY!"
WELL, TO BEGIN WITH...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING I SHOULD HAVE DONE IN THAT SITUATION?
MAHORIN, YOU'RE SO AWKWARD AT CRUCIAL MOMENTS, HUH?
JT—NU! WAAAH!!
...MAN...
GOING TO WORK IS GOING TO BE TOUGH...
HOW CAN I LOOK CUTE LITTLE KAORU IN THE EYE AND SAY SOMETHING SO RUDE!
HOW CAN I SAY THAT?!
IF YOU'D JUST SAID THAT, THEN HE MIGHT HAVE JUST LAUGHED IT OFF AND THAT WOULD BE THAT, RIGHT?
WELL...


HRM...
SHUNK
'MORNING.
...NAH...
NOT TODAY.
YAWN
SCRATCH
GOOD MORNING.
DO YOU HAVE WORK TODAY, KAORU?

.....
.....
OH, THAT SOUNDS GOOD. ♡
I HAVE FRIED RICE IN THE FRIDGE.
すと
PLOP
NOT YET...
HAVE YOU EATEN LUNCH?
OKAY.
SOMEHOW...
MAN...
AREN'T YOU HAPPY?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE EATEN TOGETHER, HUH?
STAND
すっく
LOOK, I JUST WOKE UP. ♡
SORRY...
I'LL MAKE IT...
FINE.
I GUESS...
.....

GATCHA
YO, MAHORIN.
PIZZA-LE
UH, WELL...
KAORU CALLED...
HUH?
DID YOU HAVE A SHIFT TODAY?
HUH? MAHORIN...?
KAORU'S EVEN FAKING BEING SICK...
HE'S GOING THAT FAR TO AVOID ME?
DUH DUH DUN!
I CAME IN INSTEAD.
SINCE HE SAID HE'S NOT FEELING WELL...

MUNCH
MUNCH
もぐ
MUNCH
もぐ
MUNCH
もぐ
MUNCH
もぐ...
MUNCH...
MUNCH
もぐ
HM?
.....
UM...

I WONDER...
HAVE I CHANGED AT ALL...
SINCE BACK THEN...
BUT... I HAVEN'T SHRUNK A SINGLE INCH...
IT'S NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF YOUR HEIGHT...
YOU'VE GOTTEN SMALLER.
WERE YOU REALLY THIS SMALL-MINDED...
I WONDER...

I'M NOT SMALL-MINDED.
I... TRULY...
I KNOW.
I'M...
NOT MY TRUE SELF...

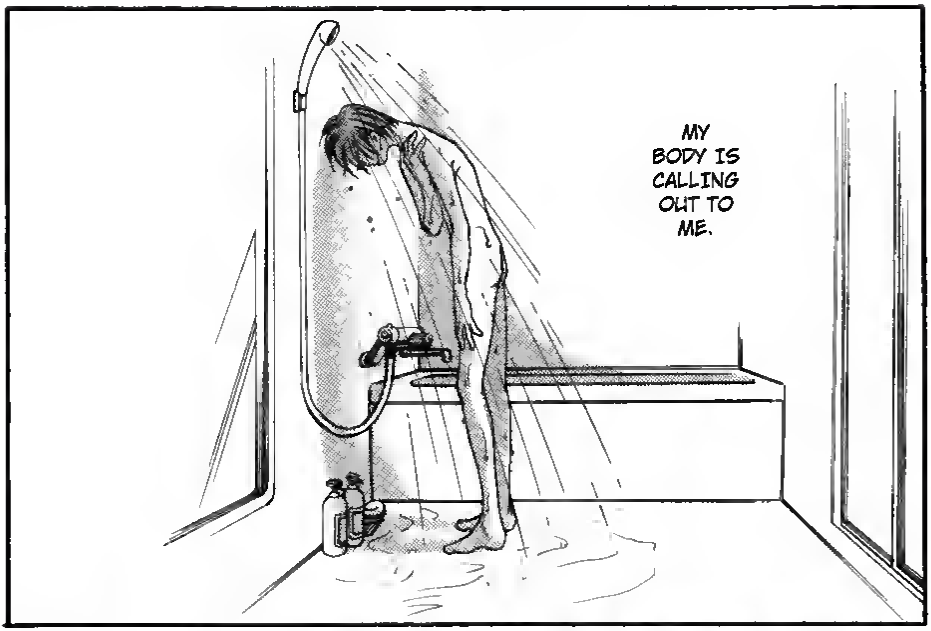
IT'S OKAY TO BE SMALL...
TO BECOME SMALL-MINDED...
BUT...
YOUR TRUE SELF IS NOT ALWAYS CORRECT, RIGHT?
IT'S SOMETHING THAT I'M PROTECTING.
SOMETHING I'M CURLING MY SMALL BODY AROUND AND PROTECTING...
すくっ
STAND
IF YOU'RE OKAY WITH IT, THEN THAT'S FINE.
THANKS FOR THE FOOD..

IT'S ALRIGHT.
CLATTER
WHY ARE YOU ACTING LIKE IT'S NOT YOUR PROBLEM?
IT'S NOT FINE!
THE TRUE SELF IS A PRECIOUS THING.
EVEN IF YOU'RE NO GOOD.
EVEN IF YOU'RE A BAD PERSON.

SSSSHHHH....
BUT ME...
MY TIME...
TSUBAKI HAS GOTTEN TALLER AND BECOME AN ADULT...
WHAT HAVE I BEEN DOING THESE LAST FIVE YEARS?

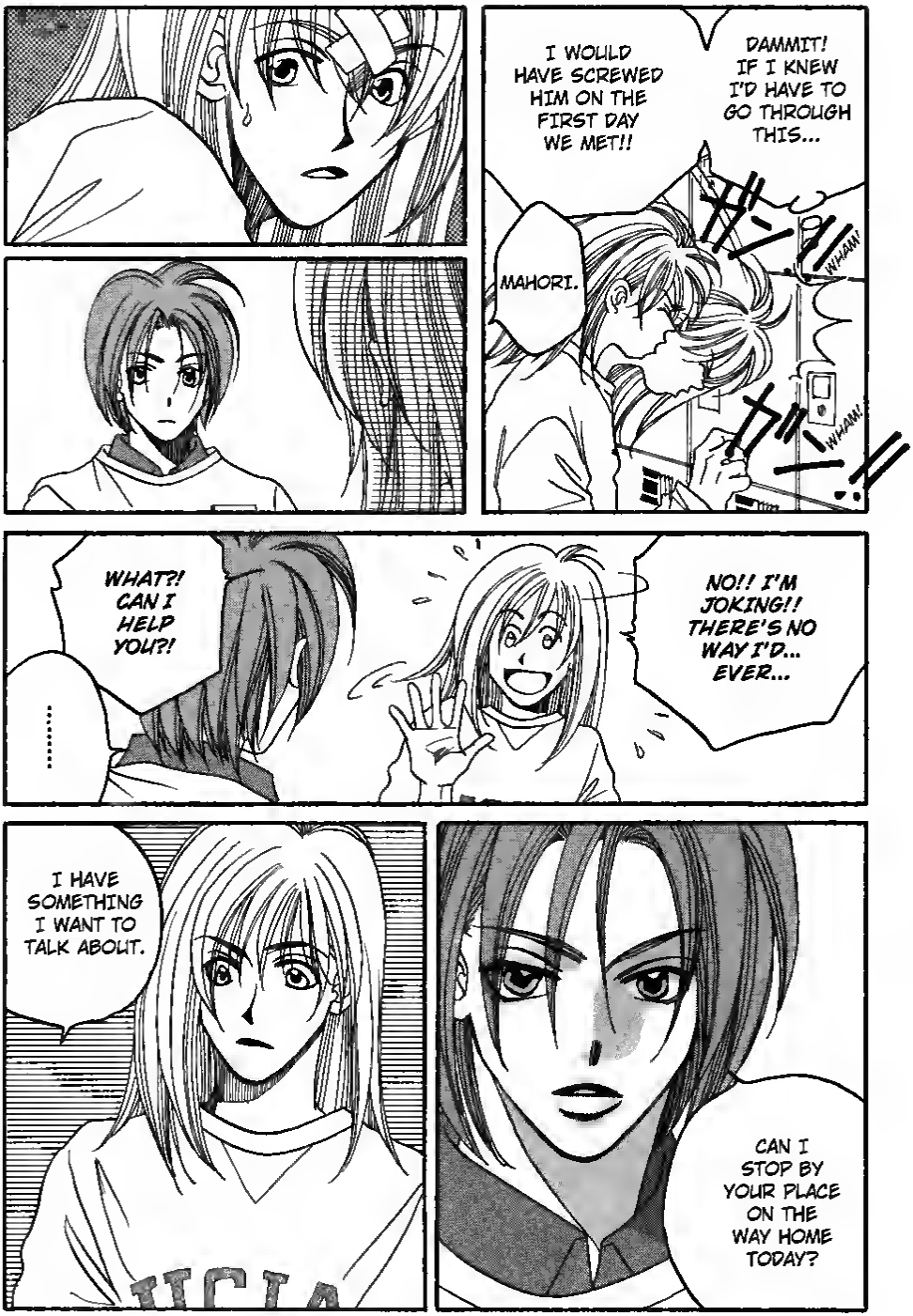
STOPPED ON THAT RIVER BANK
"KAORU..."
"I LIKE YOU."

THUD



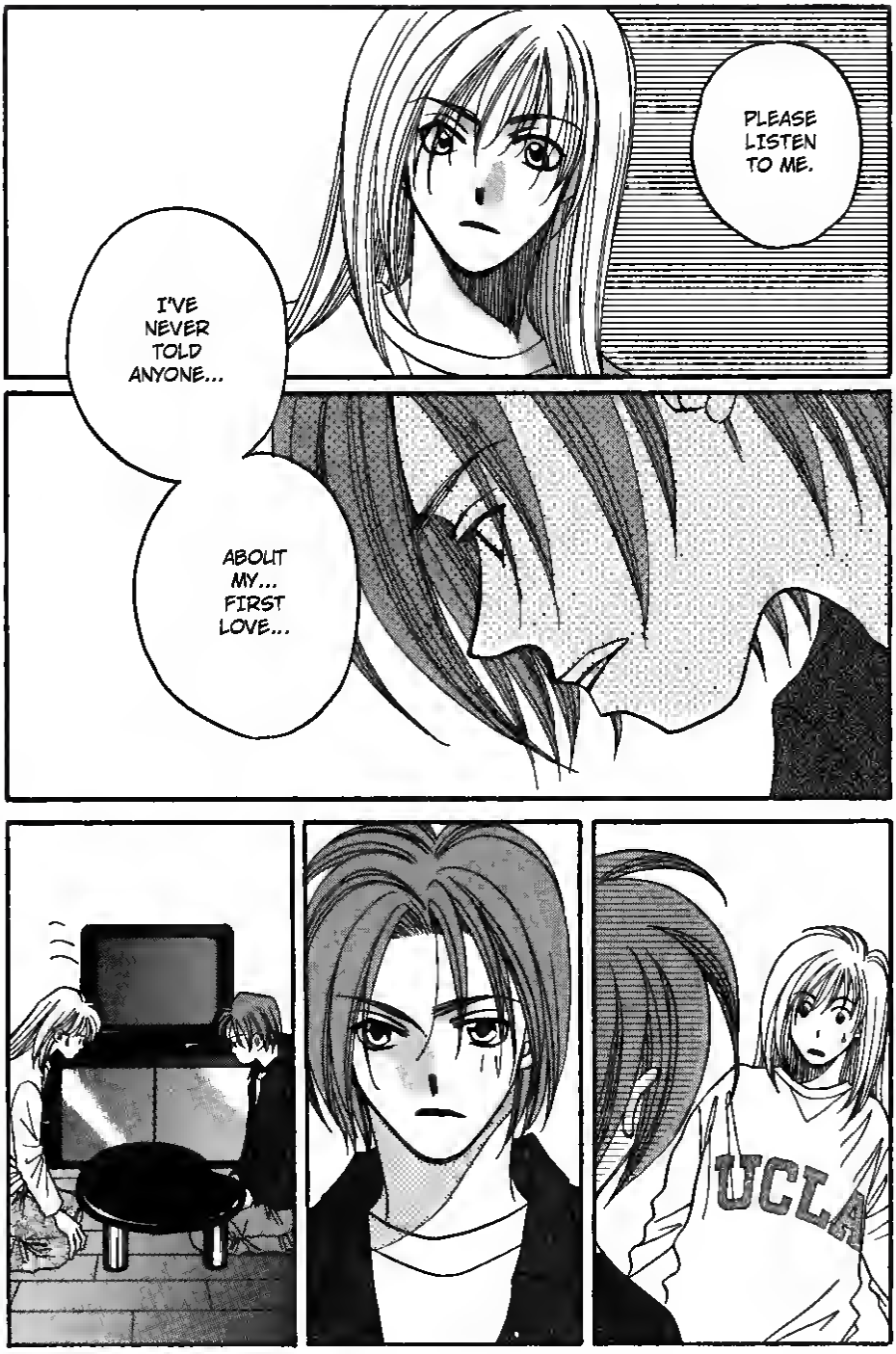
IT WANTS TO BREAK ME...

HIDDY HO~
BATCHA
OH, GREAT...
くりにゃん...
PIZZA-LE
YO, MAHORIN.
YOU... YOU'RE GIVING ME THE COLD SHOULDER?!
YOU'RE NOT BEING VERY PLEASANT, KAORU!
UH...
IGNORE...


I WOULD HAVE SCREWED HIM ON THE FIRST DAY WE MET!!
DAMMIT! IF I KNEW I'D HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS...
MAHORI.
WHAM!
WHAM!
WHAT?! CAN I HELP YOU?!
.....
NO!! I'M JOKING!! THERE'S NO WAY I'D... EVER...
I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT TO TALK ABOUT.
CAN I STOP BY YOUR PLACE ON THE WAY HOME TODAY?

WAS KAORU REALLY A FORMER PUNK OR SOMETHING?
(SORT OF CORRECT.)
HE... HE LOOKS SCARY...
STOMP
すた
STOMP
すた
TURN
くる!!
UCLA
HE'S ACTING STRANGE... I'M SCARED...
WHAT THE HELL IS HE GOING TO DO TO ME?
I'M OFF! I'LL DRIVE SAFELY!
COMPLETELY
まじ
SERIOUS
まじ

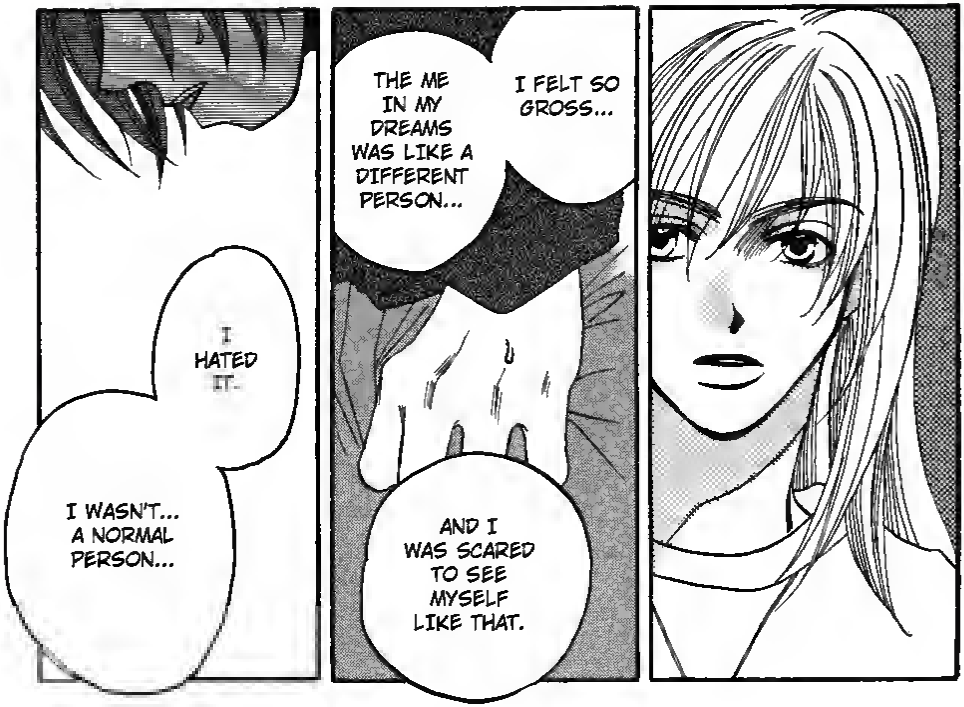
.....
NO.
IF I GET SLEEPY, IT'LL BE BAD...
UH...
WANT A BEER?
MAHORI.
YES!?
OH! I KNOW! WANT TO WATCH A VIDEO?
THE ONE I JUST RENTED IS...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I CAN TALK TO.
UCLA

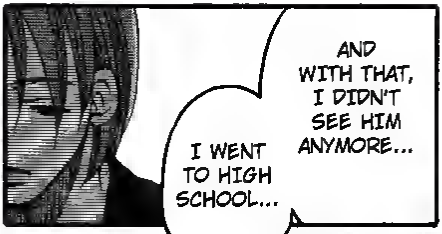

PLEASE LISTEN TO ME.
I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE...
ABOUT MY... FIRST LOVE...
UCLA

AND I TURNED 16 THAT SUMMER.
OH, I DID THAT GRADE TWICE, SO I WAS 15 AT THE TIME...
IT WAS... WHEN I WAS IN MY 3RD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL...
AT FIRST, IT WAS PLEASANT JUST TO BE TOGETHER...
AND WE LIKED LISTENING TO EACH OTHER'S STORIES...
THE LITTLE PHYSICAL CONTACT THAT WE HAD MADE ME HAPPY...
BUT...
MAYBE I LIKED THAT PERSON EVER SINCE WE MET IN SPRING...
BUT IT TOOK SOME TIME BEFORE I REALIZED IT WAS LOVE.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE...
THAT I WAS RAPIDLY LOSING CONTROL.
FROM THEN ON, IT STARTED TO GO BAD...

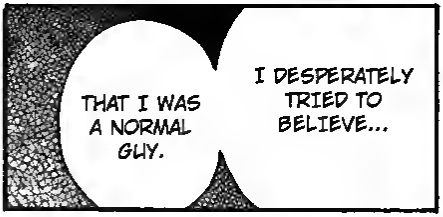
BACK THEN, ONE YEAR YOUNGER REALLY FELT LIKE A CHILD...
MY CRUSH WAS A YEAR YOUNGER...
AND WOULD LAUGH WITH THE INNOCENCE OF A CHILD.
DEFILED MY LOVE EVERY SINGLE NIGHT IN MY DREAMS...
BUT I...
THAT'S NORMAL THOUGH.
GUYS ARE LIKE THAT.
I WAS SIMPLY PERVERTED ...
I WAS PERVERTED...
BUT MY CRUSH WAS A GUY!

I...
RAPED A GUY...
IN MY DREAMS... SO MANY TIMES...

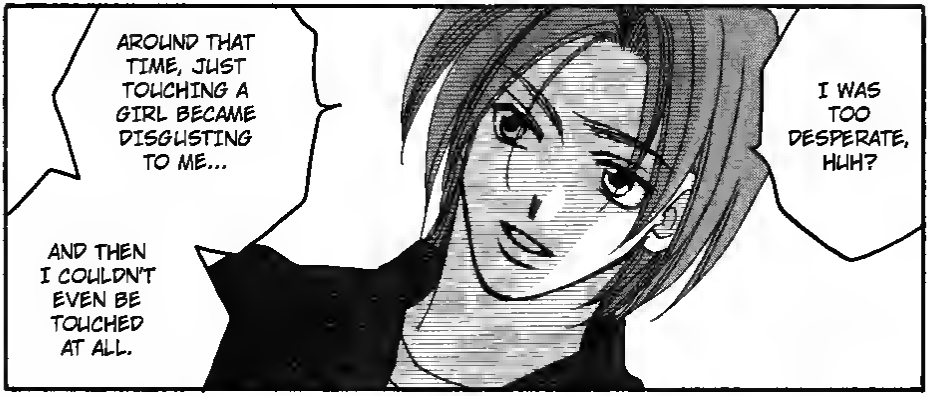

I HATED IT.
I WASN'T... A NORMAL PERSON...
THE ME IN MY DREAMS WAS LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON...
I FELT SO GROSS...
AND I WAS SCARED TO SEE MYSELF LIKE THAT.

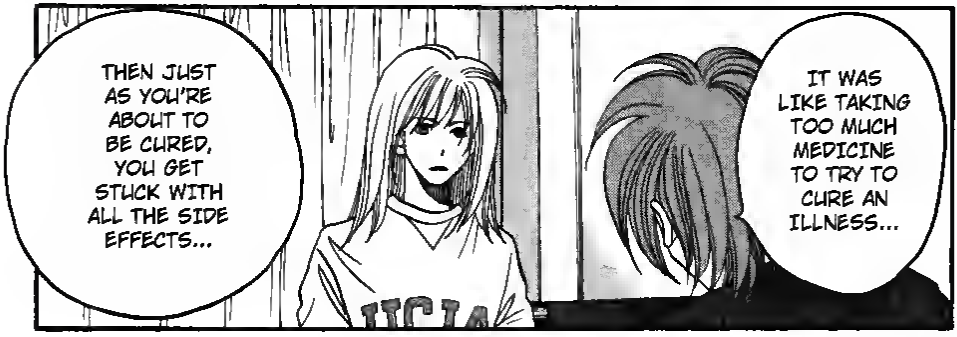

AND WITH THAT, I DIDN'T SEE HIM ANYMORE...
I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL...

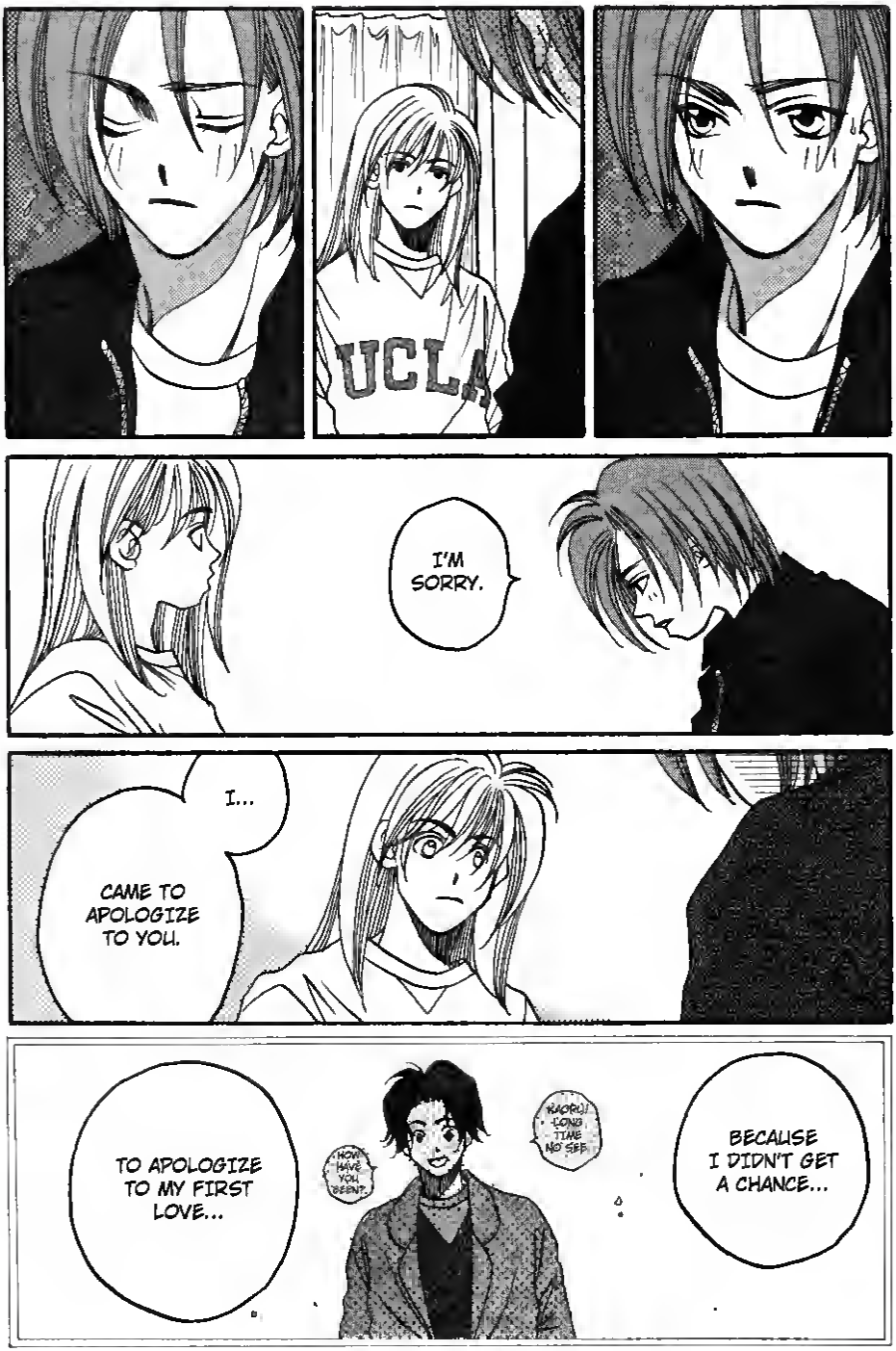
AND I SERIOUSLY DATED GIRLS.

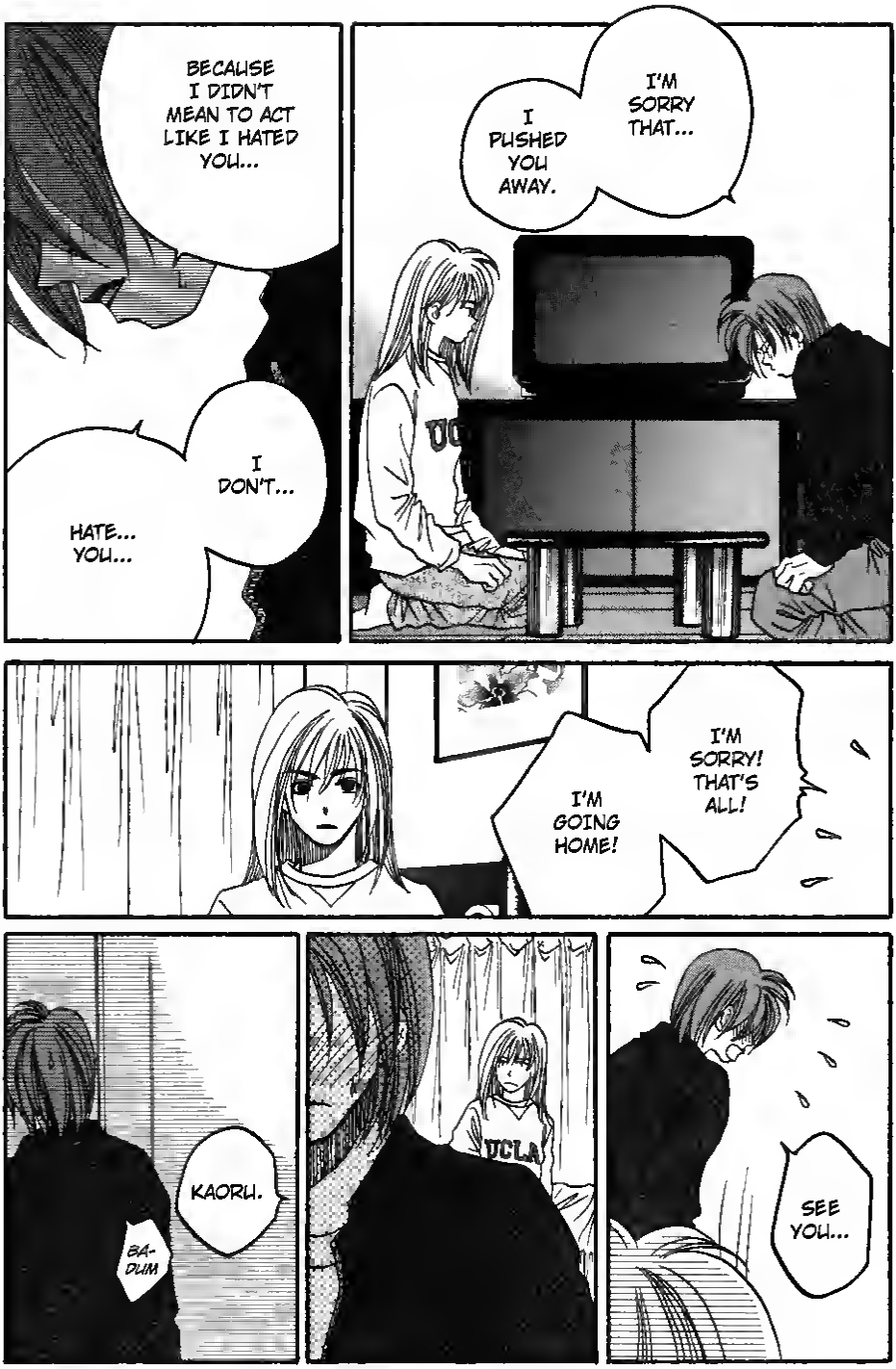

I DESPERATELY TRIED TO BELIEVE...
THAT I WAS A NORMAL GUY.

SO, I PUSHED HIM AWAY.

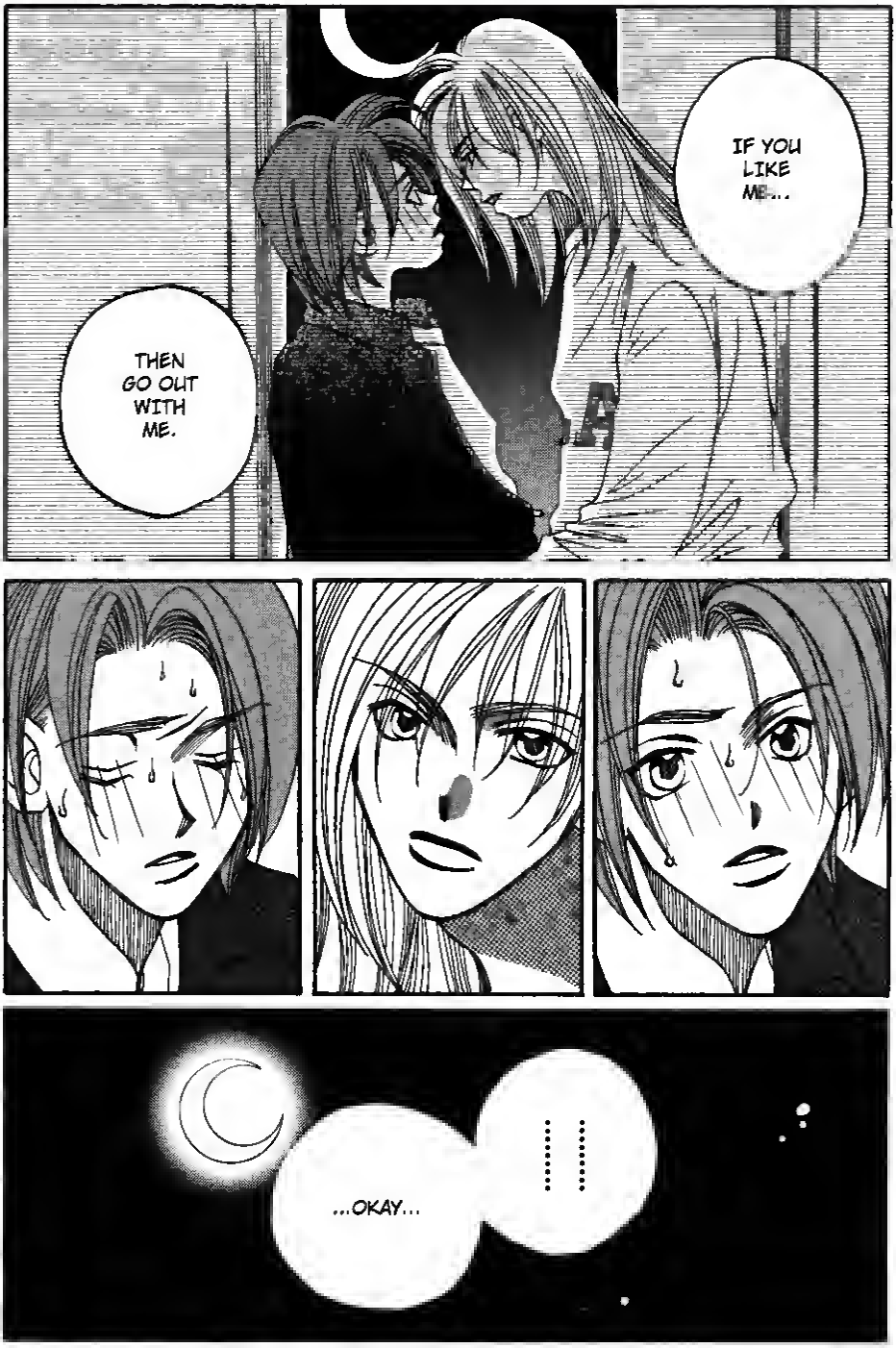

AROUND THAT TIME, JUST TOUCHING A GIRL BECAME DISGUSTING TO ME...
I WAS TOO DESPERATE, HUH?
AND THEN I COULDN'T EVEN BE TOUCHED AT ALL.


THEN JUST AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE CURED, YOU GET STUCK WITH ALL THE SIDE EFFECTS...
IT WAS LIKE TAKING TOO MUCH MEDICINE TO TRY TO CURE AN ILLNESS...

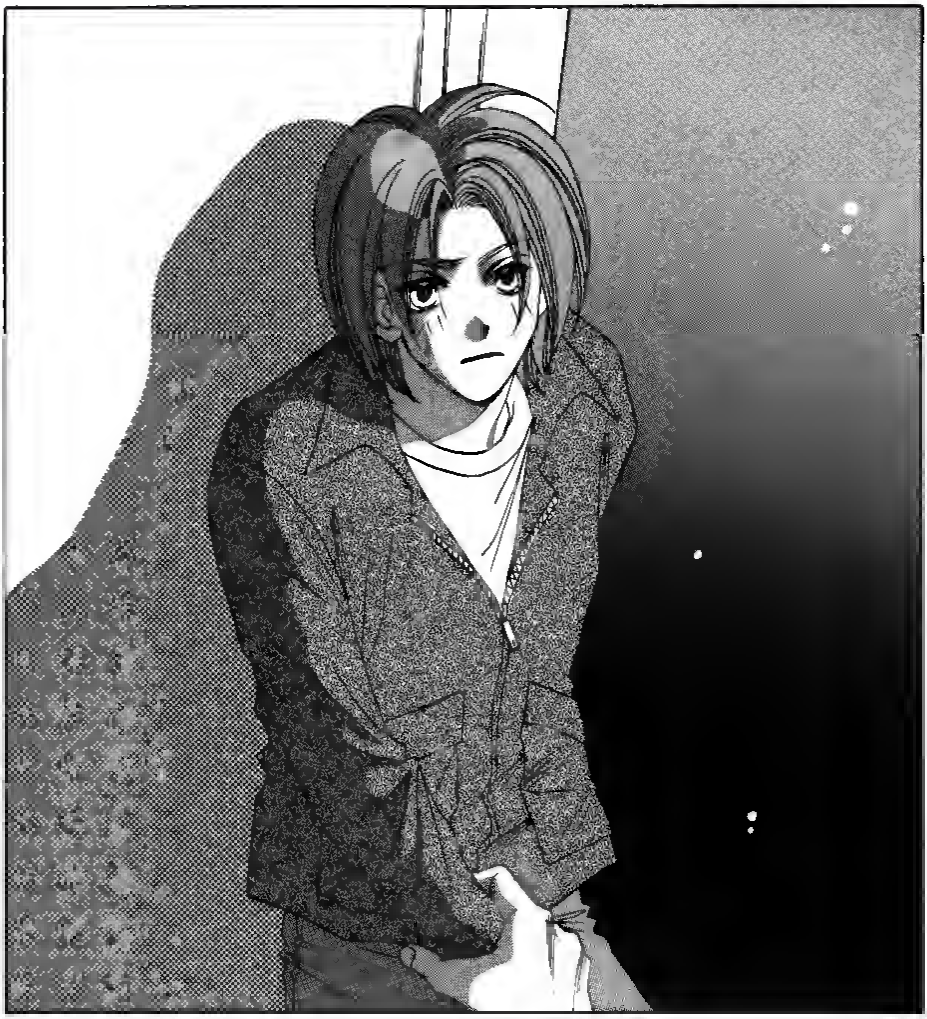

UCLA
I'M SORRY.
I...
CAME TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU.
TO APOLOGIZE TO MY FIRST LOVE...
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
KAORU! LONG TIME NO SEE
BECAUSE I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE...


BECAUSE I DIDN'T MEAN TO ACT LIKE I HATED YOU...
I DON'T...
HATE... YOU...
I'M SORRY THAT...
I PUSHED YOU AWAY.
I'M SORRY! THAT'S ALL!
I'M GOING HOME!
KAORU.
BA-DUM
UCLA
SEE YOU...

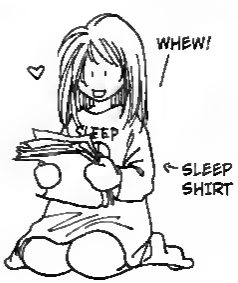
JUST SAYING "I DON'T HATE YOU"...
DOESN'T END THE CONVERSATION.
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT ME TO SAY...
ISN'T THERE?
UCL
BA-DUM


IF YOU LIKE ME...
THEN GO OUT WITH ME.
...OKAY...

CHAPTER 28: AN ADULT FROM TODAY ON

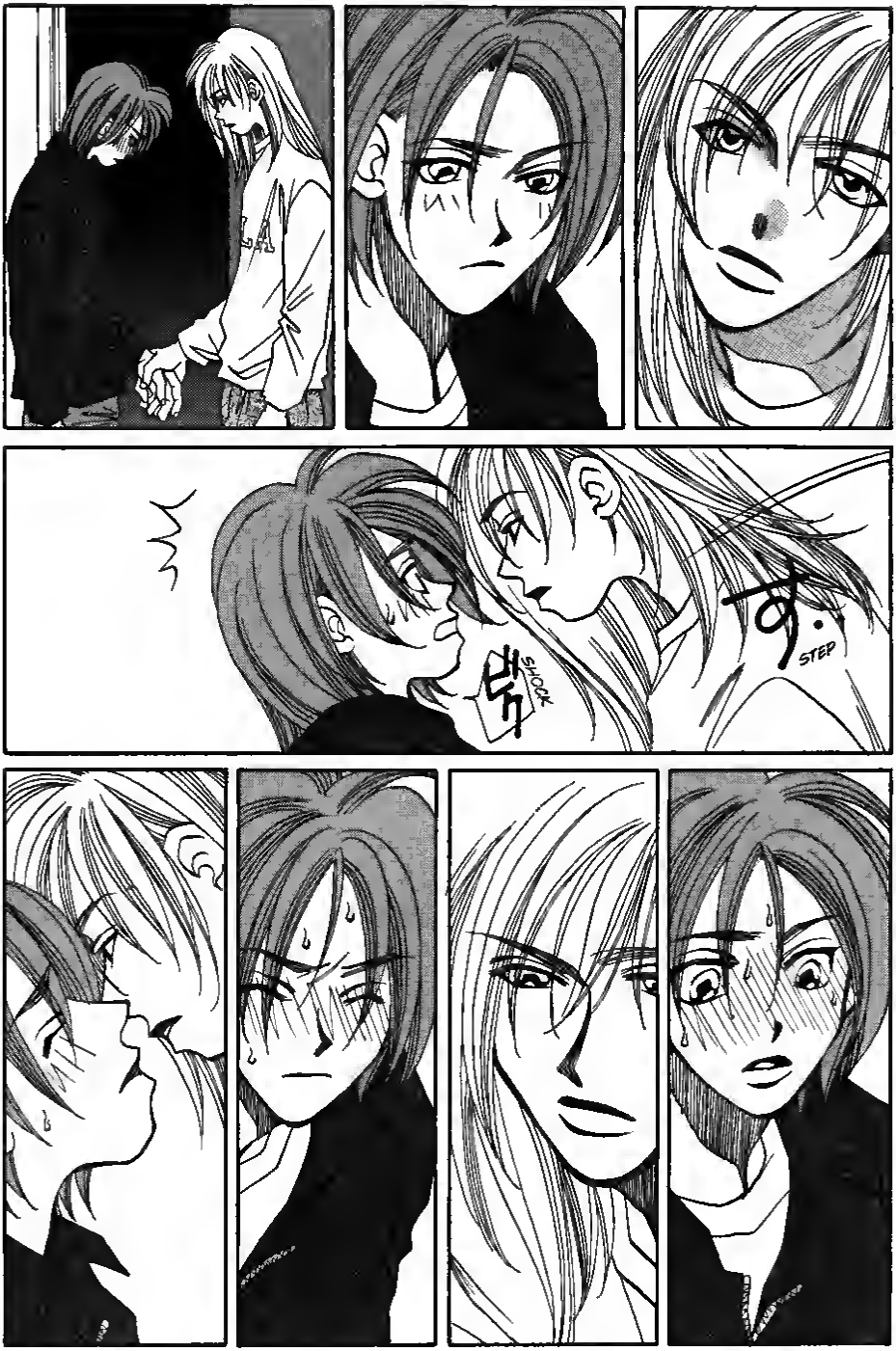


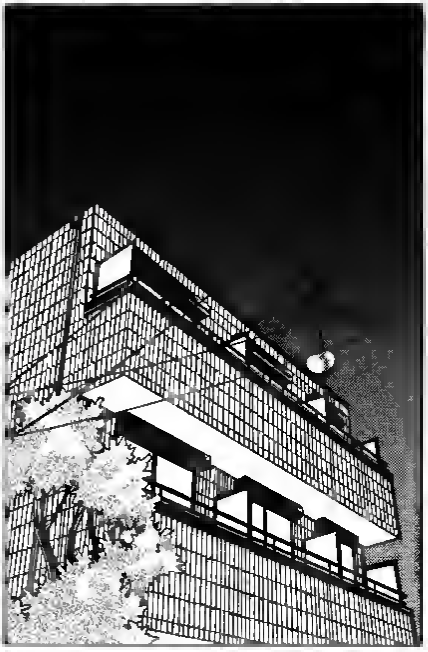
I REALLY ENJOY READING ALL OF THE LETTERS THAT MY READERS SEND ME. SINCE I DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER, I HAVE ALL OF THEM FAXED TO ME ONCE A MONTH AND READ THEM. I WANT A COMPUTER!!

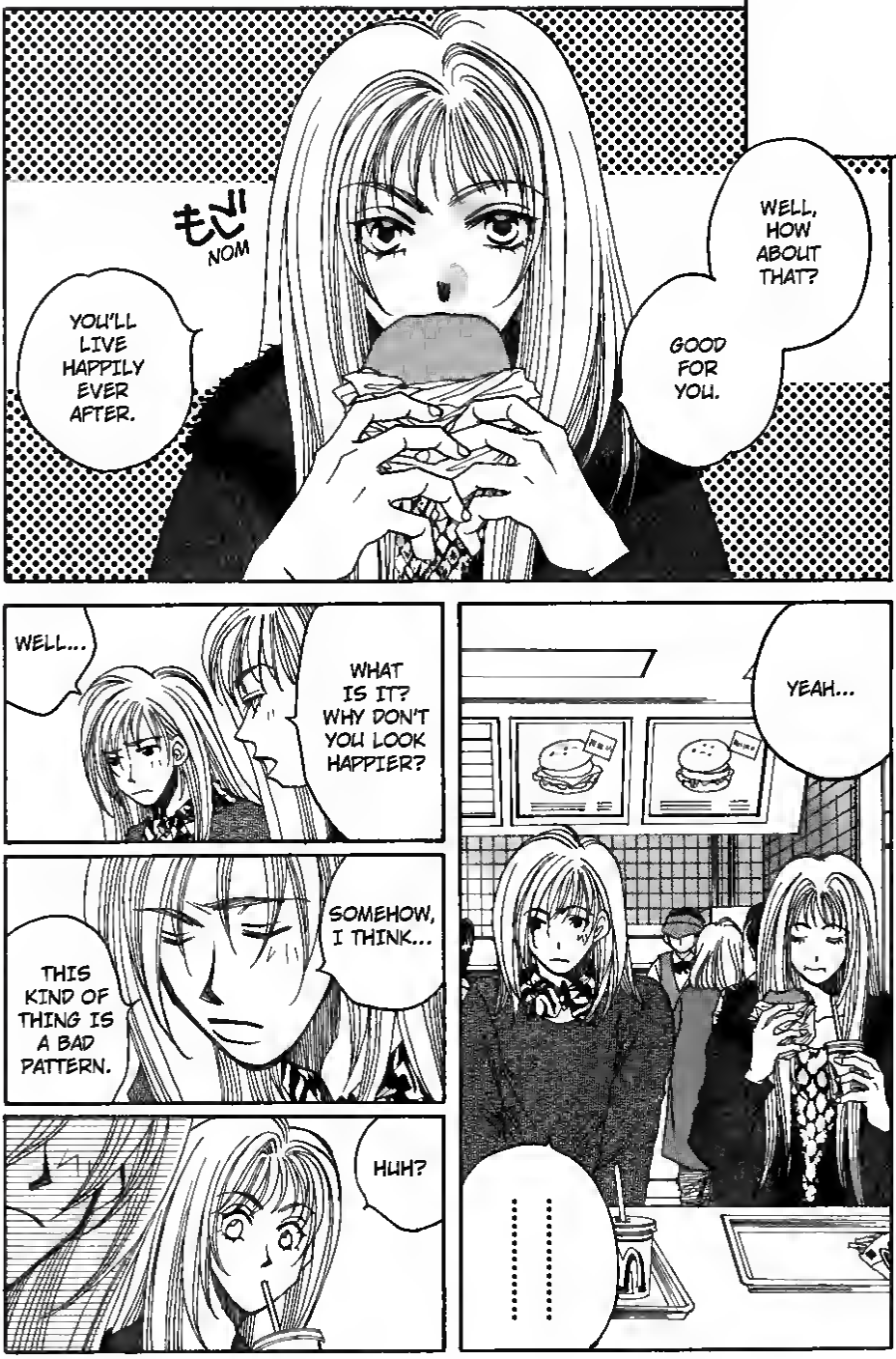


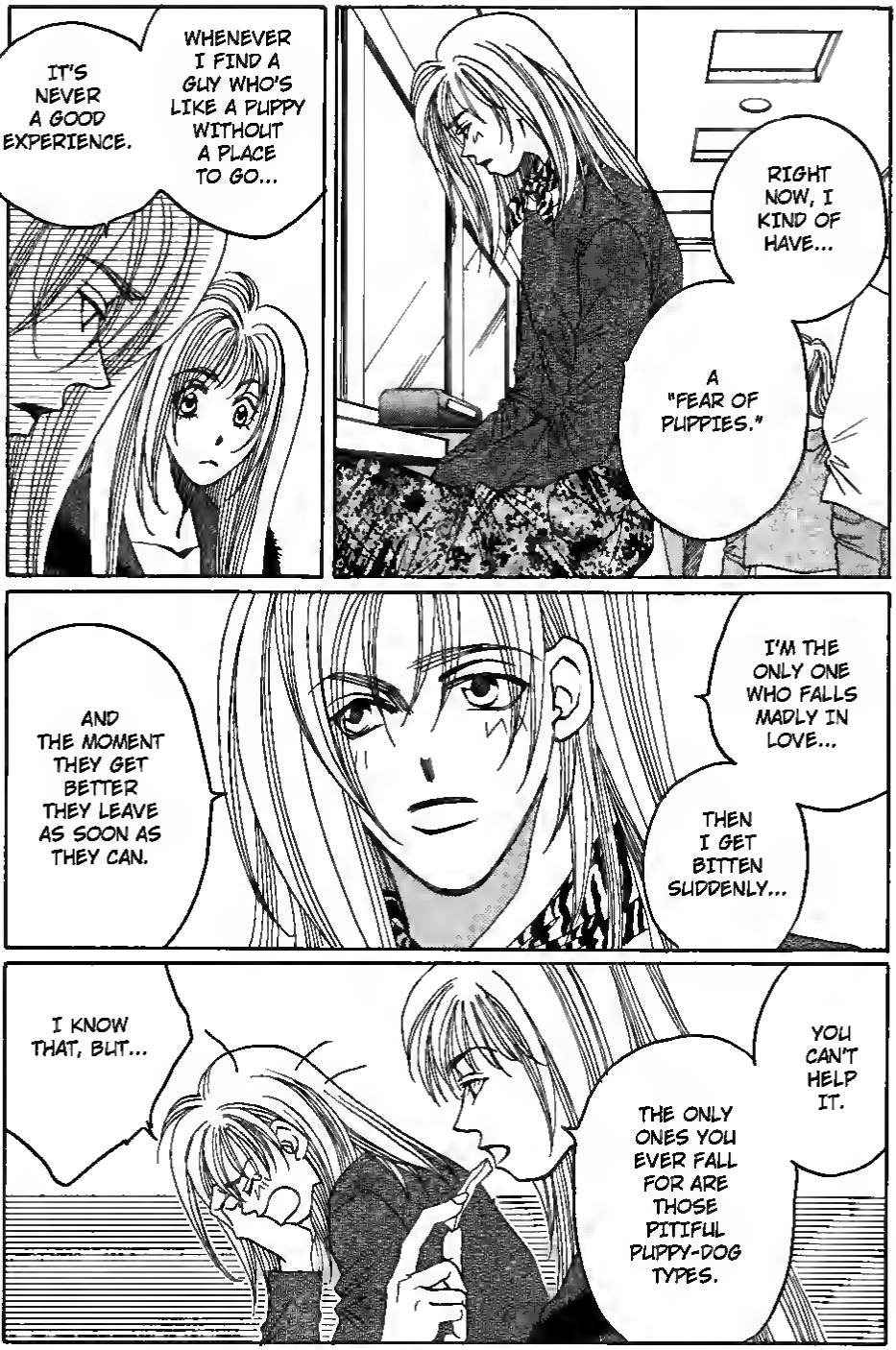
I'M TRYING HARD EVERY MONTH TO PUBLISH COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS AND COMMENTS, SO IF YOU'D LIKE, PLEASE TAKE A LOOK.

I SAID I KNOW!
IN SHORT, MY "STAMEN" WILL GO IN YOUR..
I KNOW THAT.
IT'S NOT JUST EATING TOGETHER AND HANGING OUT, YOU KNOW.
WHAT "GOING OUT" MEANS?
YOU UNDER-STAND...
BREAK ME...
WHO CAN...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE...


SHOCK
ビク!
す。
STEP




もぐ
NOM
YOU'LL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER.
GOOD FOR YOU.
WELL, HOW ABOUT THAT?
WELL...
WHAT IS IT? WHY DON'T YOU LOOK HAPPIER?
THIS KIND OF THING IS A BAD PATTERN.
SOMEHOW, I THINK...
HUH?
YEAH...
.....


IT'S NEVER A GOOD EXPERIENCE.
WHENEVER I FIND A GUY WHO'S LIKE A PUPPY WITHOUT A PLACE TO GO...
RIGHT NOW, I KIND OF HAVE...
A "FEAR OF PUPPIES."
AND THE MOMENT THEY GET BETTER THEY LEAVE AS SOON AS THEY CAN.
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO FALLS MADLY IN LOVE...
THEN I GET BITTEN SUDDENLY...
I KNOW THAT, BUT...
YOU CAN'T HELP IT.
THE ONLY ONES YOU EVER FALL FOR ARE THOSE PITIFUL PUPPY-DOG TYPES.

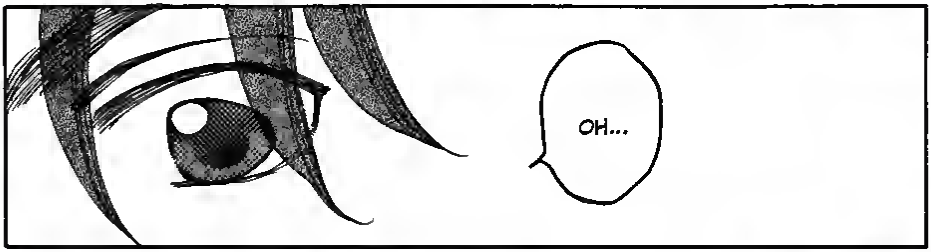
ESPECIALLY KAORU...
HE SOMEHOW SEEMS LIKE THE TYPE WHO LACKS INDEPENDENCE.
NEVER CAREFULLY MAKING SURE OF MY PARTNER'S FEELINGS...
AND JUST DRAGGING THEM ALONG TO MY CRAZY PACE.
I GUESS I'VE BEEN GOING ABOUT IT THE WRONG WAY ALL THIS TIME, HUH?
I'VE GOTTA THINK...
OF WHAT TO DO.
I WANT SOMEONE TO TRULY...
LOVE ME...

EVEN IF YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING...
THERE'S SOMEONE... WHO TRULY LOVES YOU, MAHORIN.
YOU JUST...
WOULDN'T FALL FOR THAT TYPE OF PERSON

RUMMAGE RUSTLE CREAK
SHUNK CLUNK
OH, GOOD MORNING...
OR RATHER, GOOD EVENING...
GOING TO WORK NOW?
YEP.
SHUNK
I'M OFF!
SLAM
SEE YA.
OH, I MIGHT STAY OUT TONIGHT.
ERR...

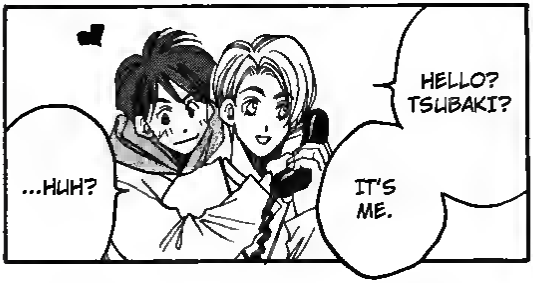
I GUESS HE'S GOT A GIRLFRIEND.
HE'S SO EASY TO READ...
LIKE WHEN HE BLUSHED A BIT AND SEEMED HAPPY TO SAY "STAYING OUT"...
TEE HEE
HE SEEMS FULL OF ENERGY...
.....
HE'S DOING WELL.
CONGRAT-ULATIONS KAORU...
I'M GLAD. I'M GLAD.
PLOP
すと
RIGHT, WELL...
RECENTLY HE'S BEEN COMPLAINING ABOUT ALL KINDS OF THINGS, BUT...
I HAVEN'T MET ANYONE! NOT A SINGLE PERSON!
KOUTAROU AND CHISATO ARE HAPPY
I'M...
SO BORED...
?
KAORU'S HAPPY
.....

I'M STILL AT THE YOUTHFUL PEAK OF 19!
.....
WHY DON'T I HAVE ANYONE?!
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S A MAN OR A WOMAN!
AS LONG AS I LIKE THEIR FACE!


OH...

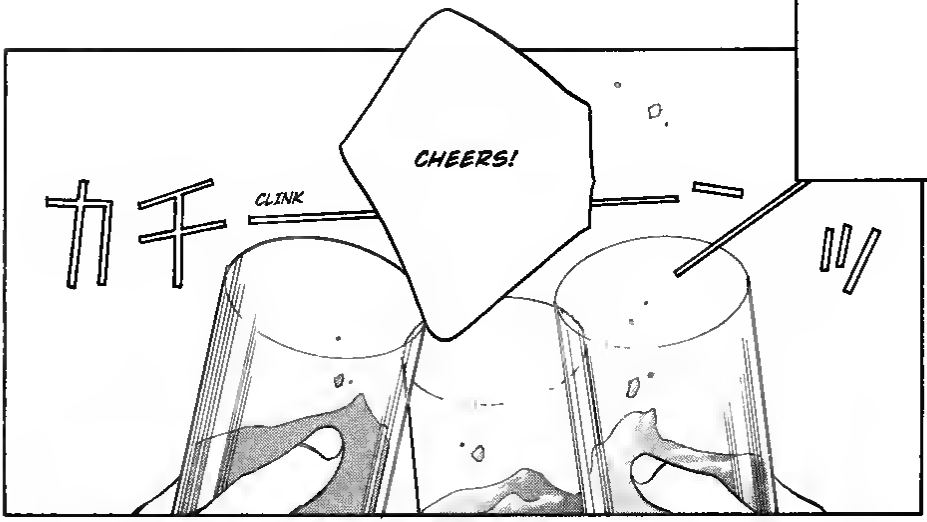
GATCHA
I'M HOME.
OH, TSUBAKI? KOU ISN'T...
OH, HE JUST GOT BACK.

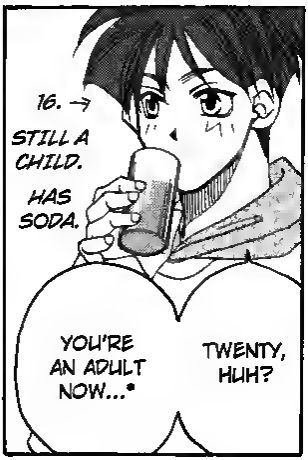
TSUBAKI.
WHO IS IT?
KOU! PHONE CALL!


...HUH?
HELLO? TSUBAKI?
IT'S ME.

RRRRRR
GLAT-TEK
HELLO, TAKAMURA RESIDENCE.

HEY, TODAY'S MY BIRTHDAY!
I'M TURNING 20. ♡
REALLY? CONGRAT-ULATIONS! ♡
THANK YOU! ♡
.....
.....
SHALL WE HAVE A PARTY?
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY "LET'S PARTY" FROM THE START...
YEAH!
WHAT? WHAT?
WHAT KIND OF PARTY?





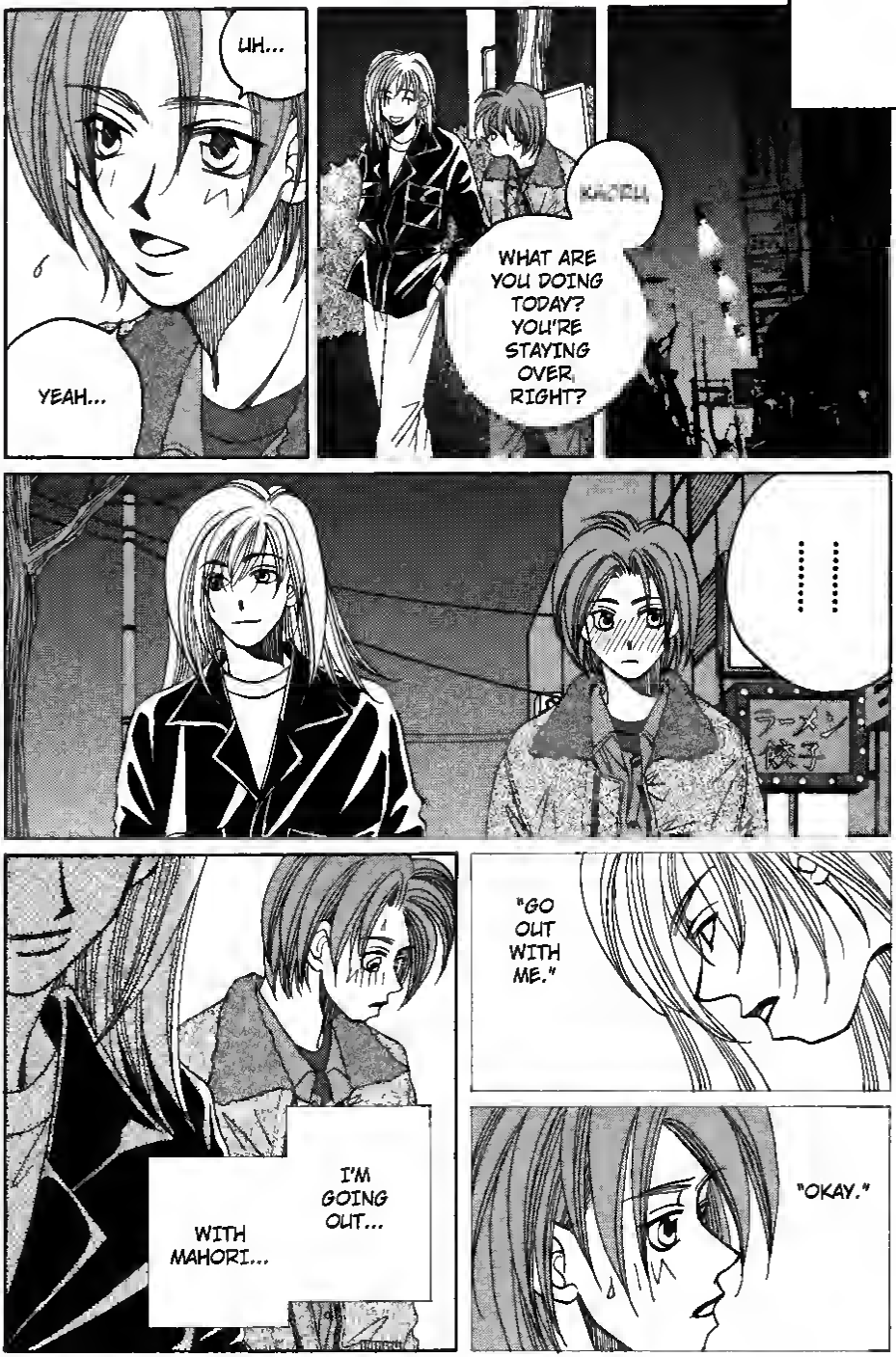
I ALREADY STARTED ALCOHOL AND CIGARETTES A LONG TIME AGO, HUH?
YEP. YEP.
BUT EVERYONE AROUND YOU WILL TREAT YOU LIKE AN ADULT, RIGHT?

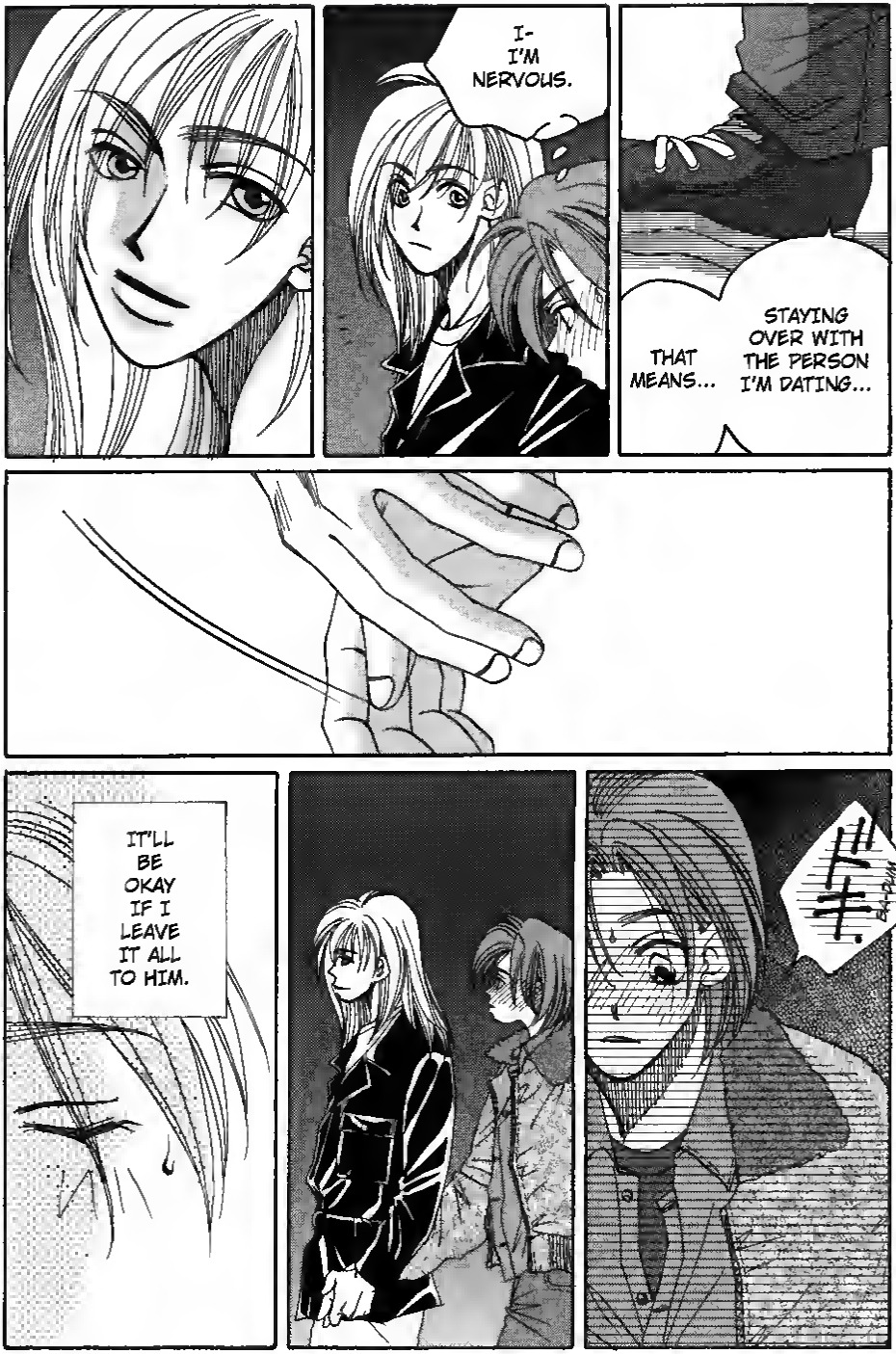
*TWENTY IS THE LEGAL AGE OF ADULTHOOD IN JAPAN. IT IS ALSO THE LEGAL AGE FOR DRINKING ALCOHOL AND SMOKING

AH, MAYBE THAT'S THE FEELING...
"A FIRST GRADER IN THE ADULT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?"
SUDDENLY FEELING LIKE THAT MAY BE PROOF THAT YOU'VE STARTED TO BECOME AN ADULT.
TWENTY IS AN ADULT...
BUT, THE WAY AN ADULT SEES IT, YOU'RE STILL COMPLETELY A KID.
AFTER ALL, TO A KID
I SEE...
THAT'S NICE.
I WANT TO HURRY AND BECOME AN ADULT TOO.
REALLY? WHAT'S THE HURRY?
WELL, OF COURSE...
IT'S FOR MYSELF...
AND ALSO FOR KOU!!

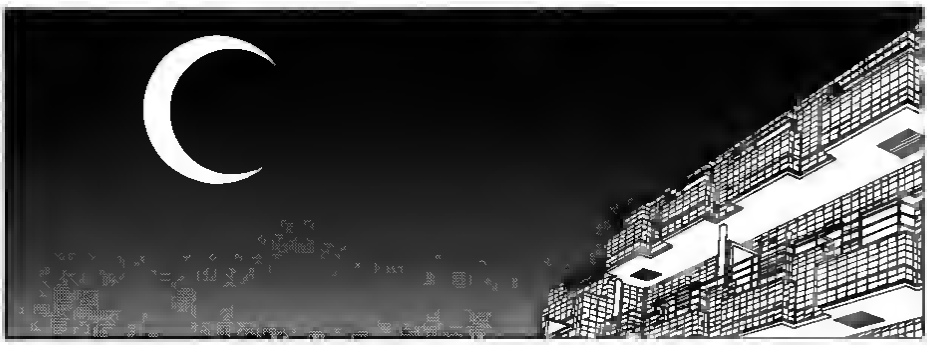
SPEAKING OF WHICH, WHERE'S YOUR ROOMMATE, TSUBAKI?
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE IF YOU HAD BROUGHT HIM.
HEY!
IT'S MY BIRTHDAY PARTY, YOU KNOW!
SMOTHER
CHISATO, YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME.
SMOTHER
OH... KAORU, HUH?
HE'S AT WORK.
HE NEVER REMEMBERED MY BIRTHDAY BEFORE.
REALLY?
I FEEL WEIRD SAYING THAT I'M HAVING MY BIRTHDAY WITH A MALE FRIEND WHO'S OVER 20...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WENT TO THE TROUBLE OF CALLING KOU...
KOUTAROU'S MY GAY FRIEND, SO IT'S OKAY!
EVEN IF I FEEL WEIRD, IT'S OKAY.
TSUBAKI, YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME.
DON'T HUG HIM!!

POINT!
びし!!
NOW, NOW
KIDS WHO CAN'T EVEN DRINK BEER SHOULD STAY OUT OF IT!
BUT IT'S SO BITTER!
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? HE'S YOURS ANYWAY.
LET GO, YOU IDIOT!
MAN, I'VE GOT TO CONSTANTLY BE ON MY GUARD WITH YOU!!
NOW, NOW...
I LEARNED FROM THE BARTENDER AT A PLACE I USED TO GO TO IN HIGH SCHOOL.
LEAVE IT TO ME!
TA-DAA!
じゃーん!
YOU CAN USE A SHAKER, KOUTAROU?
YOU CAN DRINK SWEET DRINKS, RIGHT?
I'LL MAKE ONE FOR YOU.
KOU, YOU REALLY WERE A DELINQUENT AFTER ALL!
WHAT? WHAT?
OH, MAN. OH, MAN.
WHAT THE HELL? WHY AM I GETTING CRITICIZED ALL OF A SUDDEN!
WHAT A DELINQUENT!
WHAT WERE YOU DOING GOING TO A PLACE LIKE THAT IN HIGH SCHOOL?
HUH?
YOU WERE A DELINQUENT!


UH...
YEAH...
KAORU,
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TODAY? YOU'RE STAYING OVER, RIGHT?
.....
ラーメン
餃子
I'M GOING OUT...
WITH MAHORI...
"GO OUT WITH ME."
"OKAY."


I-
I'M
NERVOUS.
THAT
MEANS...
STAYING
OVER WITH
THE PERSON
I'M DATING...
IT'LL
BE
OKAY
IF I
LEAVE
IT ALL
TO HIM.
ドキドキ

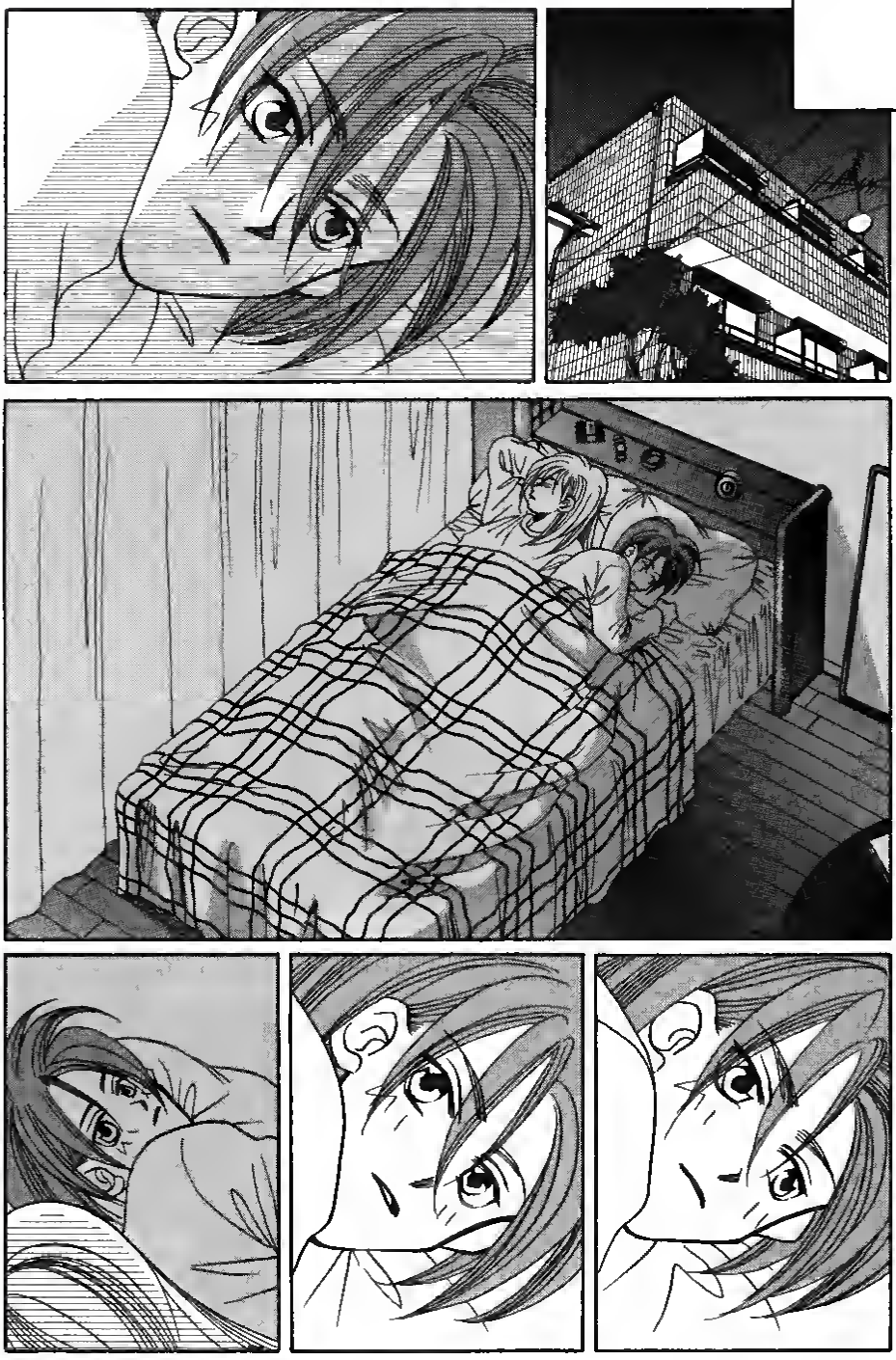
IF I CAN JUST...
LET MAHORI DO WHATEVER HE WANTS...

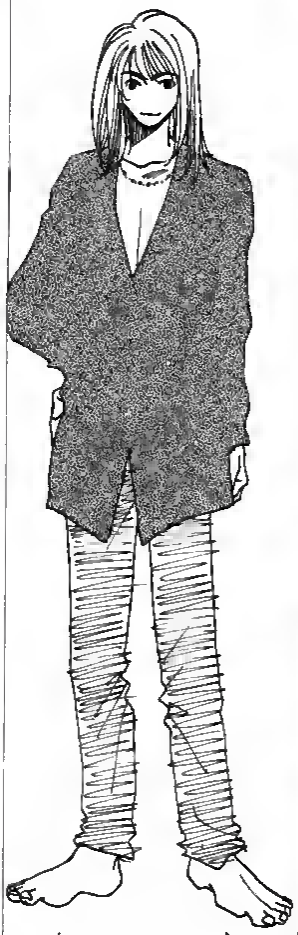


SENDING A MINOR TO BUY ALCOHOL...
IT REALLY WAS A BAD IDEA...
WHAT'S TAKING CHISATO SO LONG?
MMM
AAAH... FREE ALCOHOL IS SO GOOD...
NOPE.
IT'S OKAY BECAUSE IT'S MY BIRTHDAY, RIGHT?
LET ME KISS YOU.
I HAVEN'T KISSED ANYONE IN A WHILE...

A GIFT IS SOMETHING YOU RECEIVE, RIGHT?
SO I'M THE ONE WHO HAS TO GIVE IT TO YOU.
……

YOU'RE SO MEAN, KOU! YOU TRAITOR!
PULL
YOU IDIOT! LET GO OF HIM!
OH, HE'S BACK.
HEY!!
DAMN
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TWO DOING?!
MMM
WELCOME HOME, CHI-CHA-TO!♡
I LOVE YOU!
WAH!
THREE PEOPLE WAS THE VERY LEAST...
WHAT? BACK THEN...
STOP IT! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!
OH, GOOD IDEA! ♡
HOW ABOUT DOING A THREESOME WITH CHISATO?
KOU!!
YOU THINK BEING DRUNK IS A GOOD EXCUSE TO STEAL HIS LIPS?!
KOUTAROU'S DRUNK!
HA HA HA!
あっはっは
I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE IT...
URGH
REALLY? BUT HE'S SO CUTE.
SO THIS IS WHAT KOUTAROU'S LIKE WHEN HE'S DRUNK?
CHISATO, YOU'RE SEEING A NEW SIDE OF HIM, HUH?
THERE WAS A TIME LIKE THAT...
CHOP-STICKS
I'LL SAY...





《TAKAFUMI MAHORI》

BIRTHDAY: NOVEMBER 20TH

BLOOD TYPE: O

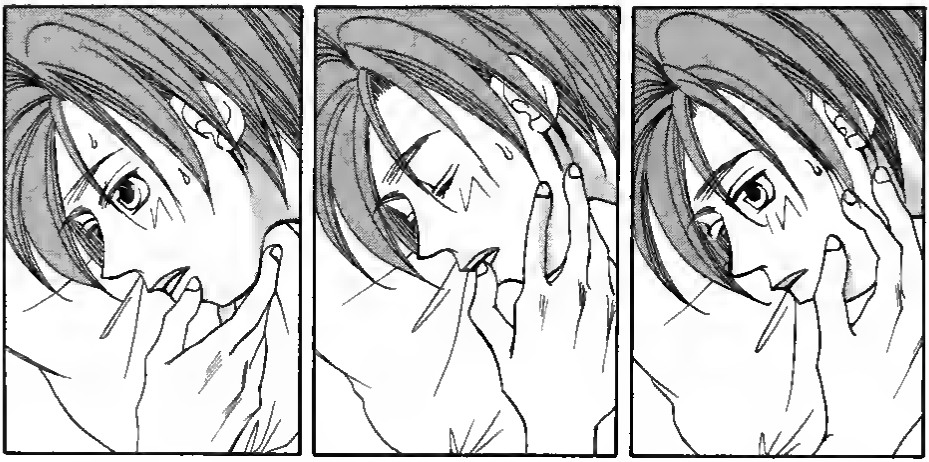
HEIGHT: 5' 9"

WEIGHT: 134 POUNDS

SHOE SIZE: 8

FAMILY: FATHER, MOTHER, AND YOUNGER SISTER

BIRTHPLACE: SAKURA, CHIBA PREFECTURE



SOMEONE'S GOING TO MAKE LOVE TO ME...

WHAT WILL I DO...

IF IT'S REALLY PLEASURABLE...

UH...
HUH? WHERE'S TSUBAKI?
HE JUST LEFT.
SSHH...
SPLASH SPLASH
JUMP
がばっ
HE SAID HE'D JUST BARELY MAKE THE LAST TRAIN.
THAT GUY DRANK SO MUCH BUT HE DIDN'T CHANGE AT ALL...
SQUEAK
...OH...
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND...
WERE SO HORRIBLE!
FROM NOW ON, ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL FOR YOU!

YOU DON'T REMEMBER?
?
??
.....
.....
...HUH? WHAT?
YOU DID!!
HUH? DID I DO SOMETHING?
WITH TSUBAKI ...
KOU...
.....
THUMP
WHO DO YOU LOVE MORE?
BETWEEN ME AND TSUBAKI...

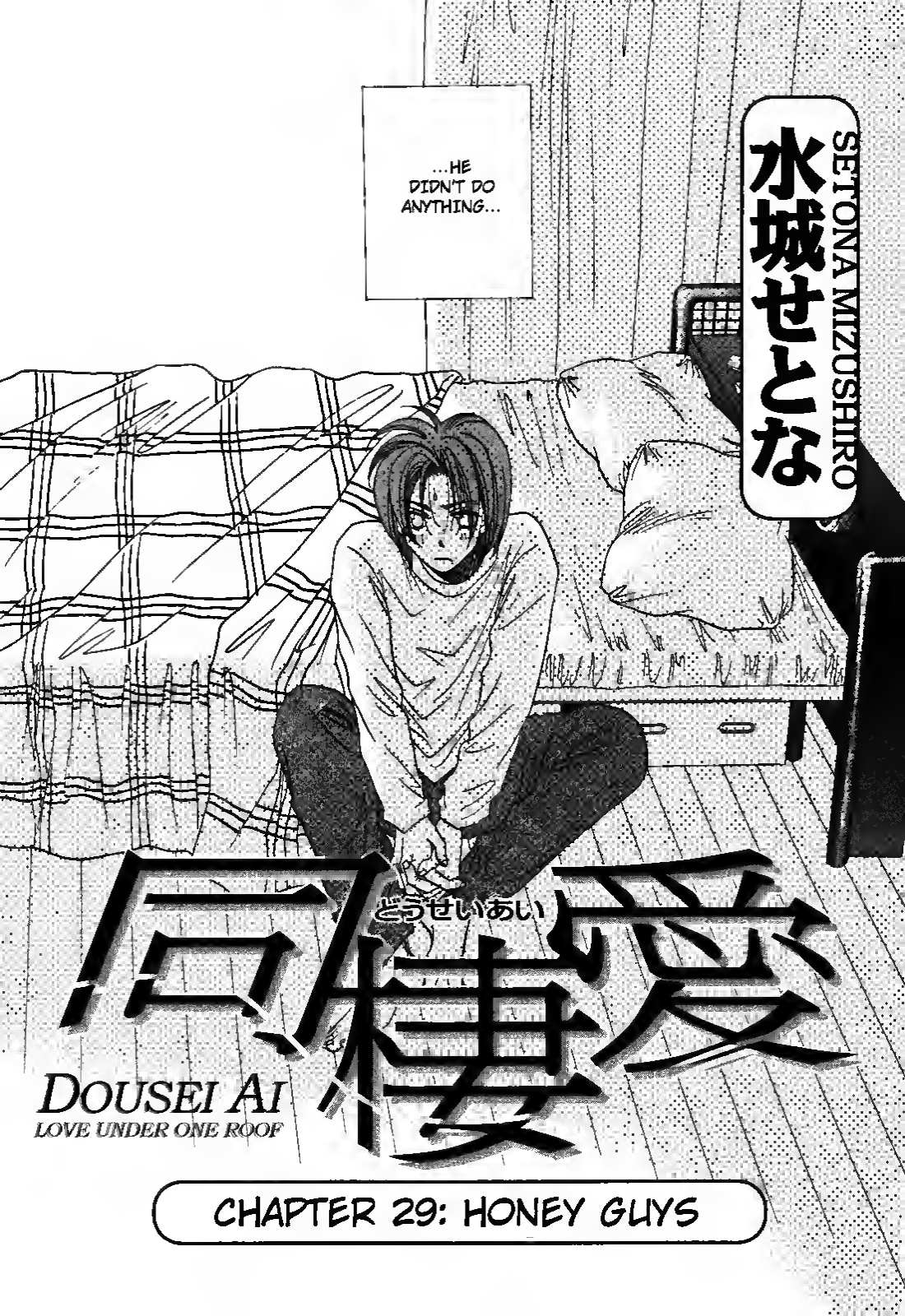
YOU REALLY ARE...
A CHILD, CHISATO.
YOU IDIOT.
I WANT TO HURRY...
AND TURN TWENTY AS WELL.
.....
I WANT TO HURRY AND BECOME AN ADULT...

THANK YOU, GOD.
THANK YOU, ME.
THANK YOU, KAORU.
THANK YOU, MOM AND DAD.
THANK YOU, KOUTAROU.
THANK YOU, CHISATO.
I LOVE YOU ALL VERY MUCH.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN FOUR YEARS, HUH?
UNTIL YOU TURN TWENTY...
IT'LL BE FOUR YEARS...
TWENTY, HUH?
FROM NOW ON, I MIGHT BE TURNING INTO...
AN UNIMAGINABLY AWESOME ADULT.
WHAT'LL I BE DOING THEN?
BY THAT TIME, I'LL BE 23...
AND I'LL BE WORKING AWAY WHILE COMPLAINING ABOUT HOW NICE IT WAS TO BE A STUDENT...
MAYBE GOTTEN A JOB SOMEWHERE...
I'LL HAVE GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE...

AND LIVING TOGETHER WITH A 20-YEAR-OLD ME.
THAT'LL BE IT...
SURELY...

MY NAME IS KAORU EBATA.
I'M A 21-YEAR-OLD MALE PART-TIMER.
RIGHT NOW, MY MENTAL STATE...
SSHH...
IS A BIT COMPLICATED.
I SPENT THE NIGHT TOGETHER WITH THE... GUY... I'M DATING.
MY MIND WAS PREPARED FOR WHAT WOULD HAPPEN...
I THOUGHT I HAD RESOLVED TO DO IT.
...BUT...
...WELL...



SETONA MIZUSHIRO
水城せとな

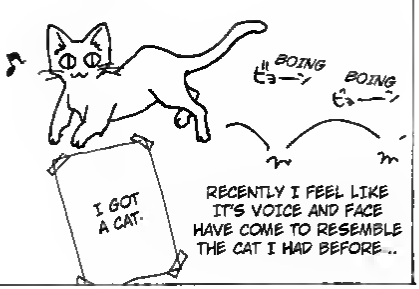
同棲愛
どうせいあい

DOUSEI AI
LOVE UNDER ONE ROOF

CHAPTER 29: HONEY GUYS

HELLO, IT'S MS. MIZUSHIRO. NOT MIZUKI, IT'S MIZUSHIRO. (EVEN NOW PEOPLE SOMETIMES MAKE THAT MISTAKE...) *DOUSEI AI* HAS FINALLY MADE IT TO VOLUME 4.

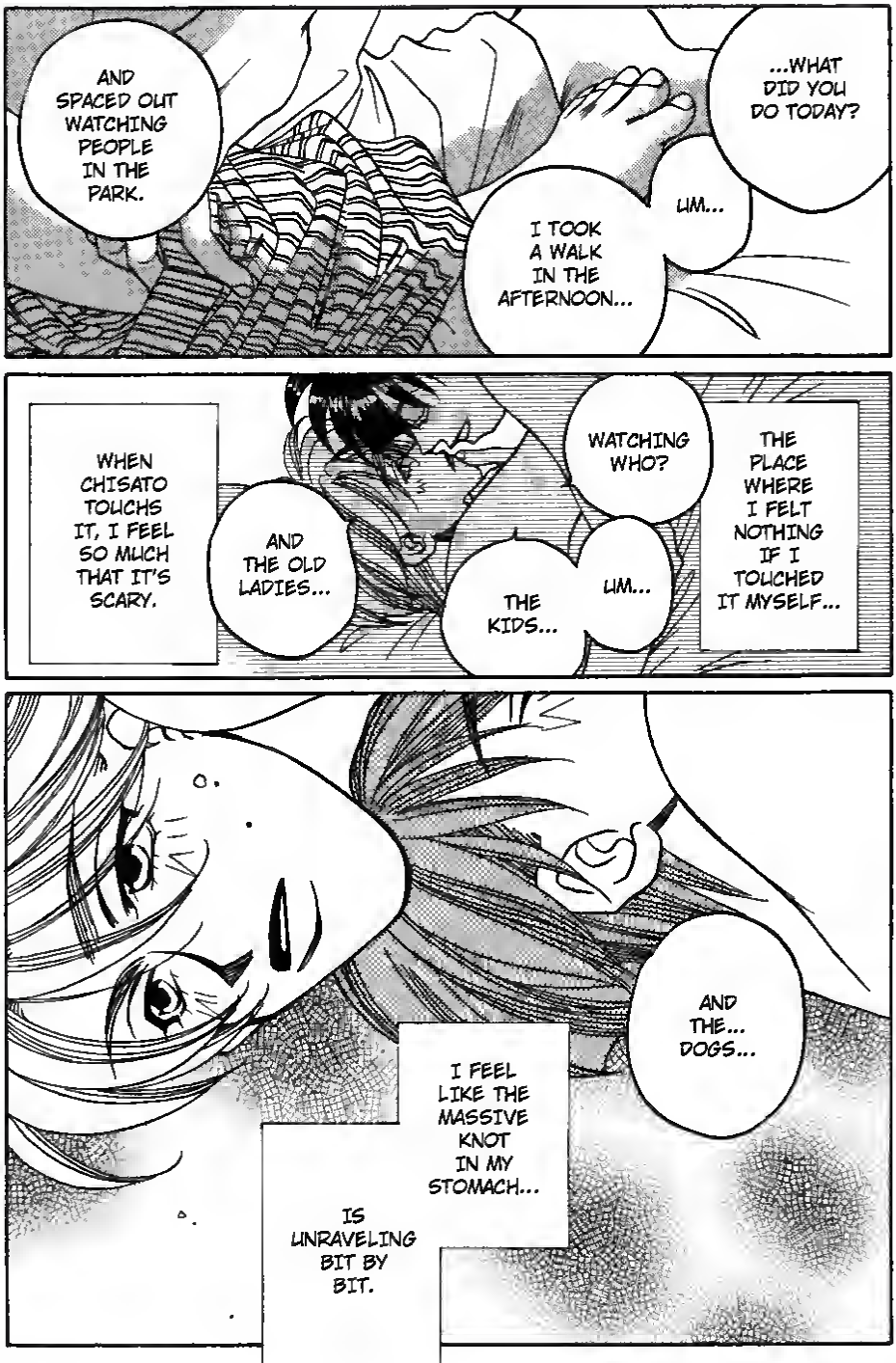
THANKS SO MUCH TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK THE TIME TO READ THIS FAR AND THANKS TO ME FOR TAKING THE TIME TO WRITE THIS FAR. SINCE THERE'S STILL A WAYS TO GO, LET'S ALL DO OUR BEST, OKAY?

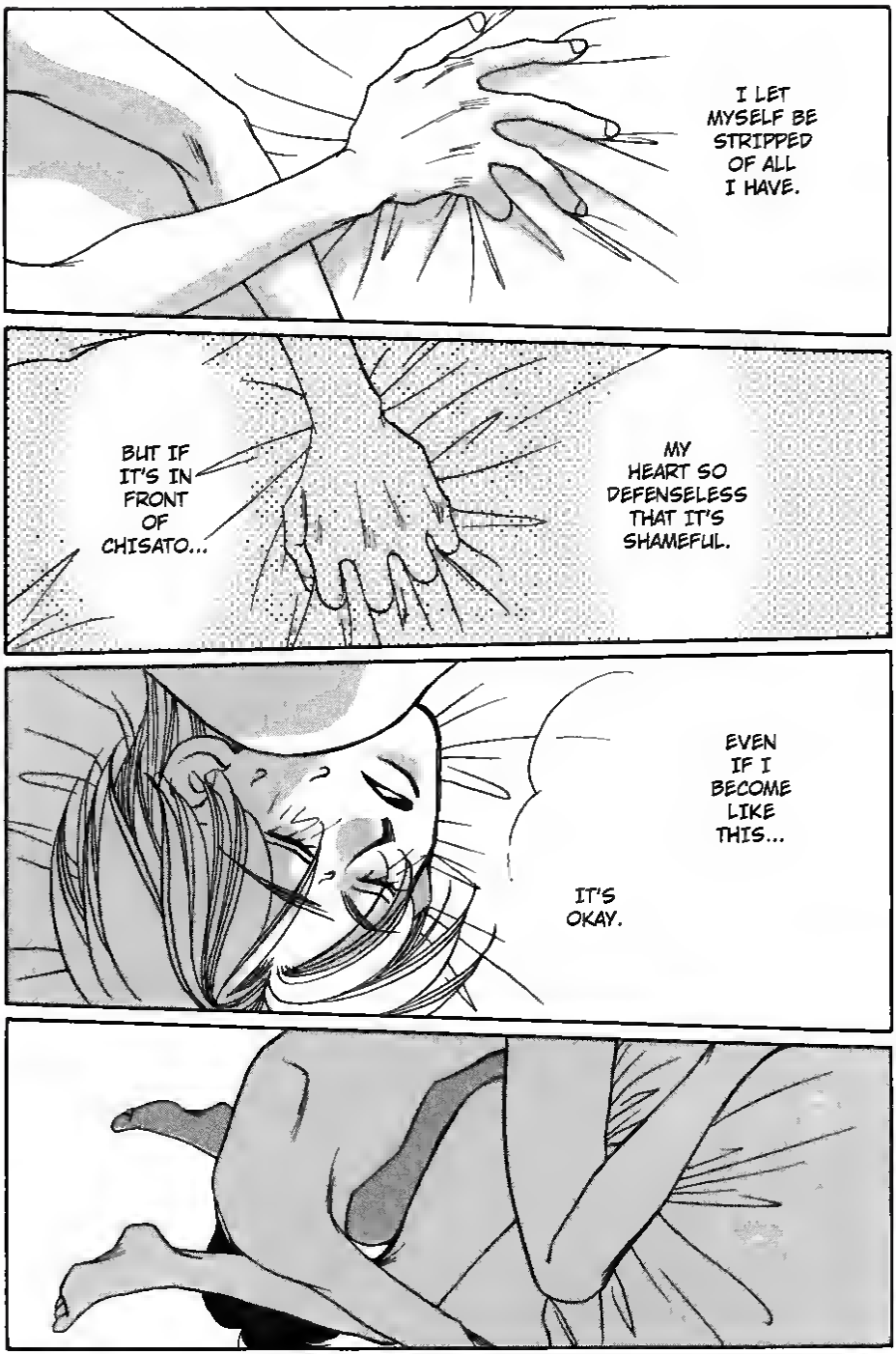


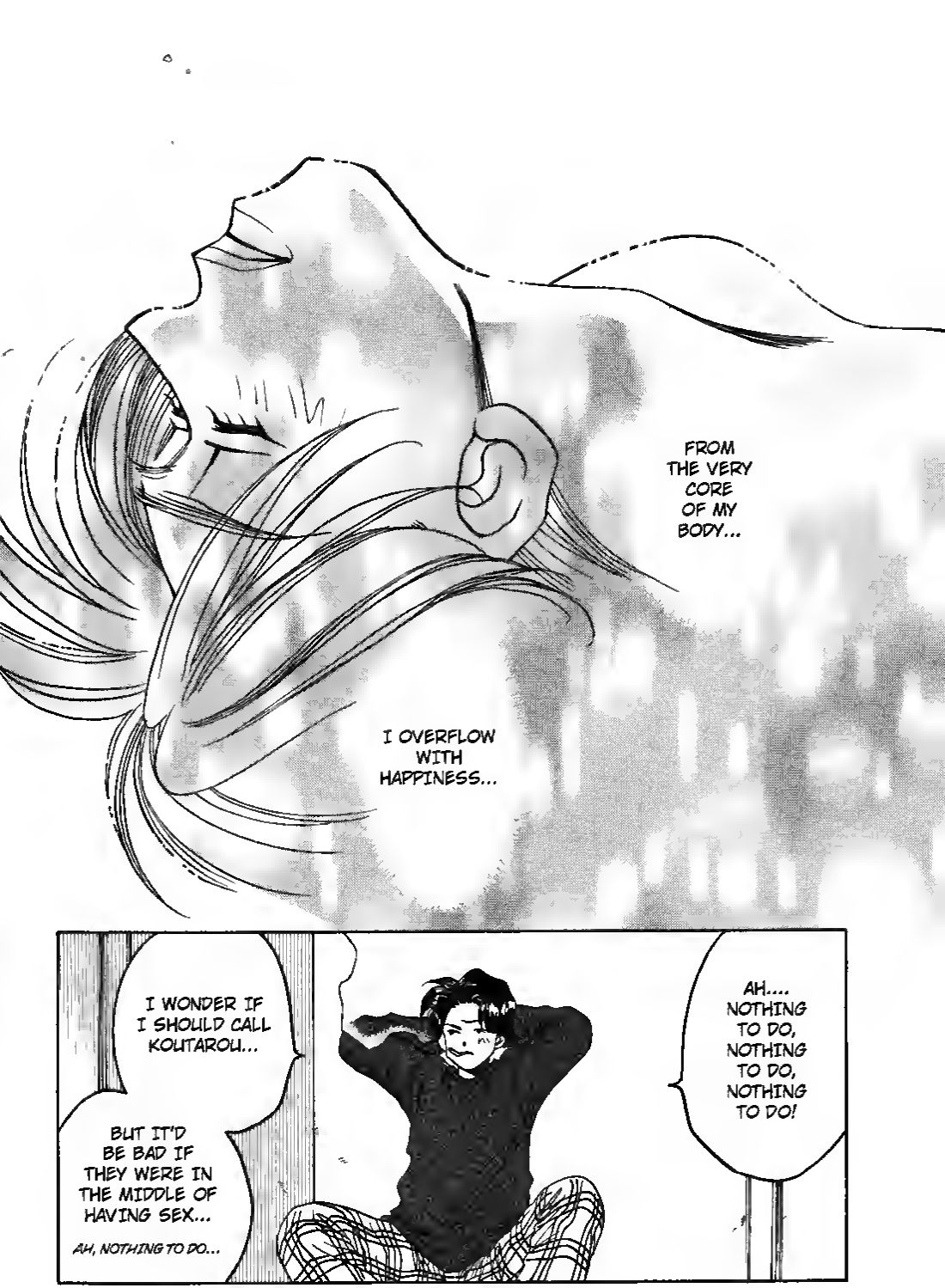
EVEN THOUGH HE WAS TALKING ABOUT HIS "STAMEN" AND SEEMING ALL INTO IT...
WHAT THE...?
HE COULD HAVE AT LEAST KISSED ME.
SSHHH...
I WONDER IF I DID SOME-THING WRONG...
LIKE MAKING A REALLY DISGUSTED FACE...
WAS THAT IT? I WONDER IF THAT WAS IT?
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE...
IF HE HAD JUST DONE IT BY FORCE...
B-BESIDES, I WAS A BIT NERVOUS...
SO I CAN'T HELP IT, RIGHT?!
SSHHH...
.....
.....

AND MAYBE HE'S BEING CAREFUL WITH ME SINCE I'M KIND OF A VIRGIN...
MAHORI... IS A GOOD GUY...
I'M A 21-YEAR-OLD MAN FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! I DON'T WANT TO BE TREATED CAREFULLY!
HMPH
...WHAT THE HELL AM I THINKING, CALLING MYSELF A VIRGIN?! HOW IDIOTIC!
.....
DID I REALLY WANT TO DO IT THAT BADLY...
.....
WHAT THE HELL?

I'M HOME!
MY NAME IS KOUTAROU TAKAMURA.
I'M LIVING WITH A CUTE BABY BIRD.
HOP
ピョ
WELCOME BACK!
WE FIGHT A LITTLE, BUT THAT BABY BIRD, MY CHISATO, IS MY PRECIOUS LOVER.


...WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?
UM...
I TOOK A WALK IN THE AFTERNOON...
AND SPACED OUT WATCHING PEOPLE IN THE PARK.
THE PLACE WHERE I FELT NOTHING IF I TOUCHED IT MYSELF...
WATCHING WHO?
UM...
THE KIDS...
AND THE OLD LADIES...
WHEN CHISATO TOUCHS IT, I FEEL SO MUCH THAT IT'S SCARY.
AND THE... DOGS...
I FEEL LIKE THE MASSIVE KNOT IN MY STOMACH...
IS UNRAVELING BIT BY BIT.


I LET MYSELF BE STRIPPED OF ALL I HAVE.
BUT IF IT'S IN FRONT OF CHISATO...
MY HEART SO DEFENSELESS THAT IT'S SHAMEFUL.
EVEN IF I BECOME LIKE THIS...
IT'S OKAY.


FROM THE VERY CORE OF MY BODY...
I OVERFLOW WITH HAPPINESS...
I WONDER IF I SHOULD CALL KOUTAROU...
BUT IT'D BE BAD IF THEY WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF HAVING SEX...
AH, NOTHING TO DO...
AH.... NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO!

CHISATO,
DINNER'S READY.
OKAY.
RUSTLE
HEY! PUT ON SOME CLOTHES!
HMPH
OKAY.
KOU, YOU'RE IN REALLY GOOD SHAPE, HUH?
BEING ABLE TO COOK SO SOON AFTER ALL THAT.
IT'S BECAUSE I'M AN ADULT.
IS THAT THE ISSUE?
I'M EXHAUSTED ...
I'M HUNGRY...
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE A CHILD.
IS THAT REALLY THE ISSUE?!
OH!
I WANT TO SEE THIS MOVIE!
I LOVE THIS ACTOR!
HM?
SHOCKING THE U.S.!

I LOVE THIS ACTRESS TOO! SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL!
OH!
NO.1 HIT IN THE U.S.!
AND SHE'S BLOND TOO! ♡
YEAH...
YEAH...
AND HE'S BLOND TOO! ♡
HE'S SO COOL!
KOU, COULD IT BE...
YOU LIKE BLONDS?
THAT'S WHY WESTERN PORN IS THE BEST, RIGHT?!
RIGHT?!
YEAH...
LIVING TOGETHER, YOU GET TO SEE MANY DIFFERENT SIDES OF A PERSON, HUH?
ARE THEY REALLY?
UH... WELL... UM...
KATAAM
かた
OF COURSE I DO!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH BLONDS? THEY'RE THE BEST!!
力説!!
FULL EMPHASIS

OH.
GATCHA
ガチャ・・
PIZZA-LI
YOU'RE EARLY TODAY...
YEP.
CLASS ENDED EARLY.
CLATTER
YO.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
UH... UM...
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO AFTER WORK?
PIZZA
SPECIAL CHEE
SLAM

SSF...
"WHAT"...?
"WHAT"...?!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO TONIGHT?
I LOVE YOU, KAORU.
WAIT-
WHA-

I LOVE YOU, KAORU.
...LET'S SLEEP TOGETHER...
OKAY, I UNDER-STAND!
I UNDER-STAND!
SL-
SLEEP-
HEY!
YO!
WHAT'S UP?

WANT TO TAKE ONE TOGETHER?
WHAT THE HELL?
SO HE REALLY IS INTO IT.
KAORU,
YOU CAN SHOWER FIRST.
OKAY...
STEP
STEP
すた すた
YOU SHOULD ONLY MAKE THAT SUGGESTION WHEN WE ALREADY HAVE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP...
IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND, RIGHT? THE OTHER WAY...
WHA-
YOU IDIOT!!
IS THAT... WHAT WE HAVE NOW...?
.....
.....
THAT KIND OF RELATION-SHIP...

はっ
HUH?
RATTLE
カチ
OKAY, SO, I'VE GOT TO WASH EVERY LITTLE PART REALLY WELL...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'LL BE DOING WHERE...
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
UM...
SSHHH....
BA-DUM
CLICK
カチャ.
SPLASH

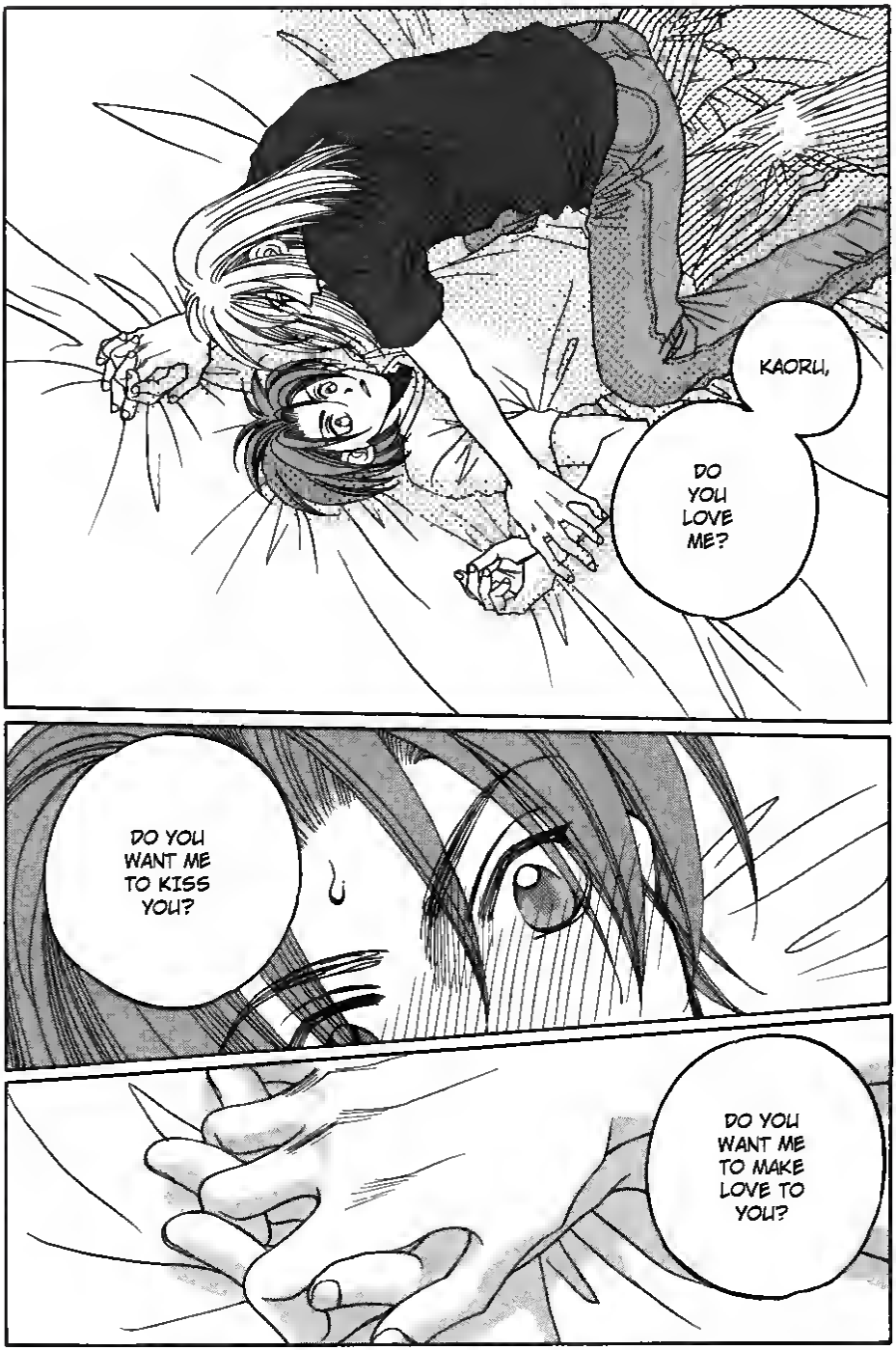
I ALWAYS KEEP MY HAIR BANDS RIGHT HERE.
OH! THERE THEY ARE!
MENTALLY PREPARE MYSELF...! MENTALLY PREPARE...!
SSHHH
DID HE SERIOUSLY INTEND TO SHOWER WITH ME?!
HE REALLY CAME IN!
GAH!!
SSHHH...

CLUNK
SPLASH
SSHHH...
...HUH?
.....
I WONDER IF I NEVER MEET ANYONE BECAUSE I WORK LATE AT NIGHT...
I WONDER IF I SHOULD CHANGE TO THE DAY SHIFT...
WORKING
AH... NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO...

POUR
POUR
LOOKS LIKE YOU HAD TROUBLE WAKING UP FOR A CHANGE.
YOU'RE QUITE TIRED OUT, HUH?
OH.
'MORNING, KAORU.

ZZZ
MAHORI DID NOTHING BUT GO STRAIGHT TO SLEEP NEXT TO ME!
THAT'S WHY!
IS THIS WHAT "SLEEP TOGETHER"... NORMALLY MEANS?!
I COULDN'T GET TO SLEEP...
MAHORI...
IS IT REALLY TRUE...
THAT YOU LOVE ME?
DO YOU DOUBT ME?
IT'S TRUE.

GUYS LIKE ME ARE PRETTY RARE...
SO YOU'RE DOING THIS JUST FOR FUN, RIGHT?
TOYING WITH ME!
YOU DON'T REALLY HAVE...
ANYONE ELSE THAT YOU'RE DOING DIRTY STUFF WITH?
NOPE, NO ONE.


KAORU,
DO YOU LOVE ME?
DO YOU WANT ME TO KISS YOU?
DO YOU WANT ME TO MAKE LOVE TO YOU?

DO YOU WANT MY BODY?
I'M... JUST SAYING...
THAT YOU CAN DO... ANYTHING YOU WANT TO DO!
W-
WELL... I...

OH.
SIT UP
I GUESS I'LL MAKE SOME TOAST FIRST...
MAN, I'M HUNGRY...
HEY...
"OH"...?
"OH"...?
I ONLY BOUGHT IT AT THE LOCAL BAKERY...
BUT THIS BREAD IS SO GOOD.
THAT IDIOT!
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY "I WANT IT"!!
FIRST OF ALL, IT'S A BASIC RULE TO ACT RELUCTANT FOR YOUR FIRST TIME, RIGHT?

HI-BL
AGHHH...
WHAT'LL I DO?
I OVERDID IT...
WHAT'LL I DO? THIS IS BAD...
CLUNK
I'M HOME!
BA-DUM!
HE'LL BE MAD AT ME... KOU WILL BE MAD AT ME...
TH-THIS IS SO "PUNK"!
SO "DAYTIME DRAMA"...

BUT THEN, I FELL ASLEEP WHILE I WAS WAITING WITH THE GEL IN MY HAIR, AND IT TURNED OUT LIKE THIS...
WHAT'LL I DO? I'VE GOTTA BUY SOMETHING TO TURN IT BACK!
I THOUGHT I'D DO JUST A LITTLE... JUST A LITTLE BIT OF BLOND...
I'M SO SORRY!
CHISATO! YOUR HAIR...
HUH?
SQUEEZE
YOU ARE
SO INSANELY CUTE!!
EXACTLY LIKE A BABY BIRD!

うっとり…
ENCHANTED...
IT'S REALLY NICE! IT'S FANTASTIC!
I'M FALLING IN LOVE ALL OVER AGAIN!
BLOND HAIR REALLY IS WONDERFUL...
YOU REALLY LOVE BLONDS THAT MUCH, HUH?
CHUNK
OH, WELCOME HOME...
I'M BACK...
YOU'RE AWAKE?
YEP.
ARE YOU GOING TO BED NOW, TSUBAKI?
YEP.
YOU'RE A VAMPIRE, HUH?
WANT SOME COFFEE?
NAH...
IT'S OKAY. I'M GOING TO BED SOON...
BUT I JUST POURED THE EXTRA IN A CUP...
COME ON...

GULP
ゴクッ
'KAY...
すと
FLOP
WHAT... DO YOU THINK...
HM?
HEY...
UM...
.....
.....
SHOCK
!!
IT'S THAT SIMPLE.
I WOULDN'T IF SHE WAS REALLY UGLY.
IF A GUY...
WON'T MAKE A MOVE ON A GIRL THAT HE'S DATING...
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

SO I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT AT ALL!
TREMBLE
ANYWAY, THE GUY WAS THE ONE WHO SAID "I LOVE YOU" FIRST.
"REALLY UGLY!"
HOW COULD YOU?!
I DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING THAT BAD!
A GIRL FROM WORK WAS TALKING TO ME ABOUT IT...
OH...
OH... WELL... IT'S JUST...
...WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?
HE KIND OF GOOFS OFF A LOT...
HE'S NICE AND SOCIABLE, AND HE LOOKS OUT FOR PEOPLE... I GUESS...
WELL... THE GUY...
HAS LONG HAIR AND IS COOL-LOOKING...
HM...
I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE THEY ARE...
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
UM...
UMMM...
HM...
EXACTLY!
SO SOME-ONE LIKE MAHORI?
WHAT ABOUT THE GIRL?

OH...
HER HEIGHT, HUH?
WHAT THE...?
BAM
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT AGE!!
SHE'S 21!
SHE'S JUST A NORMAL GIRL...
SHE'S KIND OF LITTLE THOUGH...
HUH? HOW OLD?
THAT SOUNDS BAD...
SOME-ONE LIKE MAHORI ...
AND SOME-ONE LIKE KAORU...
IT'S KIND OF HARD TO PICTURE IT...
THE GIRL...
FIDGET
FIDGET
IS LIKE ME... I GUESS...
SHE SEEMS A LOT LIKE ME...
THE GUY WAS THE ONE WHO ASKED HER OUT...
AND EVEN THOUGH HE SAID "I LOVE YOU"...
AND THEY'VE SLEPT TOGETHER IN THE SAME BED MANY TIMES, HE WON'T DO ANYTHING...
...THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID...

.....
WHAT IS THAT GUY THINKING?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
OH, I SEE...
IMPO-
NO WAY!
MAHORI AND KAORU ARE DATING.
MAHORI AND KAORU ARE SLEEPING IN THE SAME BED.
MAHORI WON'T DO ANYTHING TO KAORU.
.....
DAZED
とて
DAZED
とて
YES?!
YOU KNOW...
.....
ドキ
ドキ
.....
I'M GOING TO BED.
I'M REALLY SLEEPY...

GOOD NIGHT!
SHUNK
SLAM!
WHAT THE HELL?
WE SO RARELY GET TO SEE EACH OTHER...
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE IF HE HAD AT LEAST LISTENED TO WHAT I HAD TO SAY...
SO HAPPY! ♡
WEIRD GUY...
AH... NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO, NOTHING TO DO...
I WANT TO BE IN LOVE.
I WANT TO HAVE SEX!

CHAPTER 30: KNOCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR

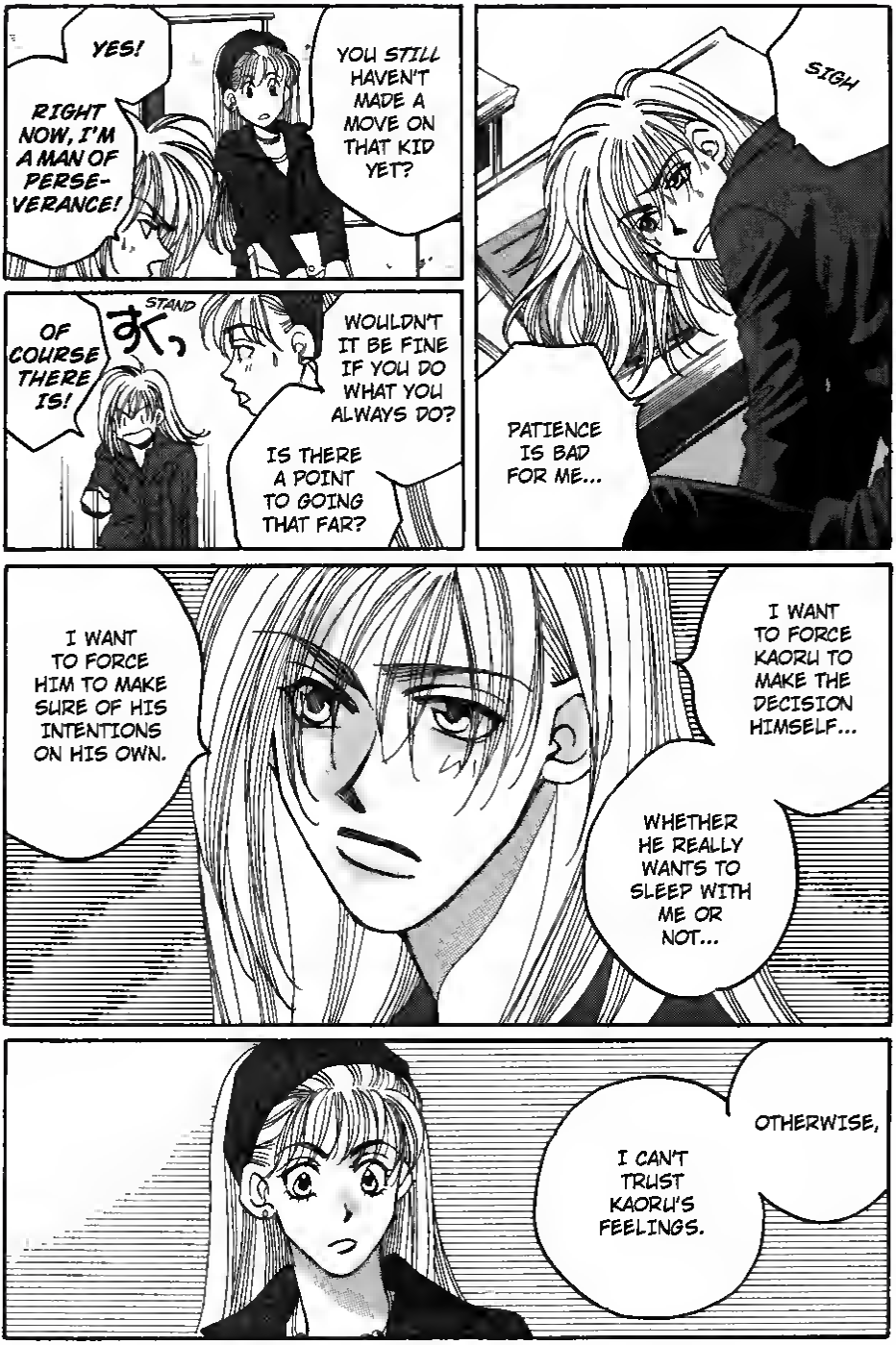
AUTHOR'S NOTES:

TSUBAKI

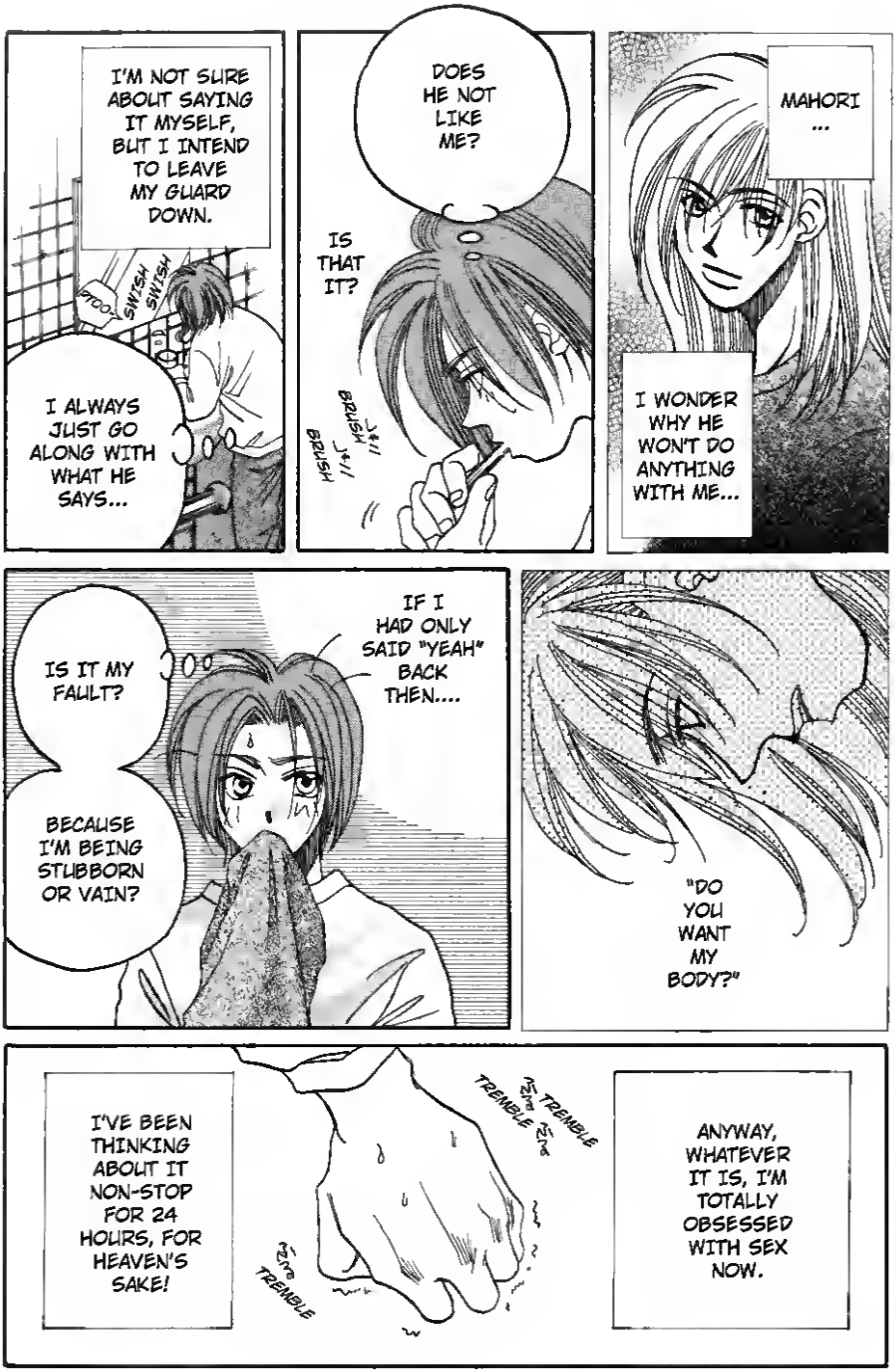
HE JUST DOES WHATEVER HE WANTS, AND HE'S EGOCENTRIC. HE'S A PROTAGONIST WHO IS FAR REMOVED FROM THE GENERAL PROTAGONIST TYPE...

I THINK IT'S FINE IF READERS ARE MORE ANGRY OR ANNOYED WITH HIM, BUT INSTEAD OF BEING ANGRY, THEY SHOULD CHEER HIM ON.

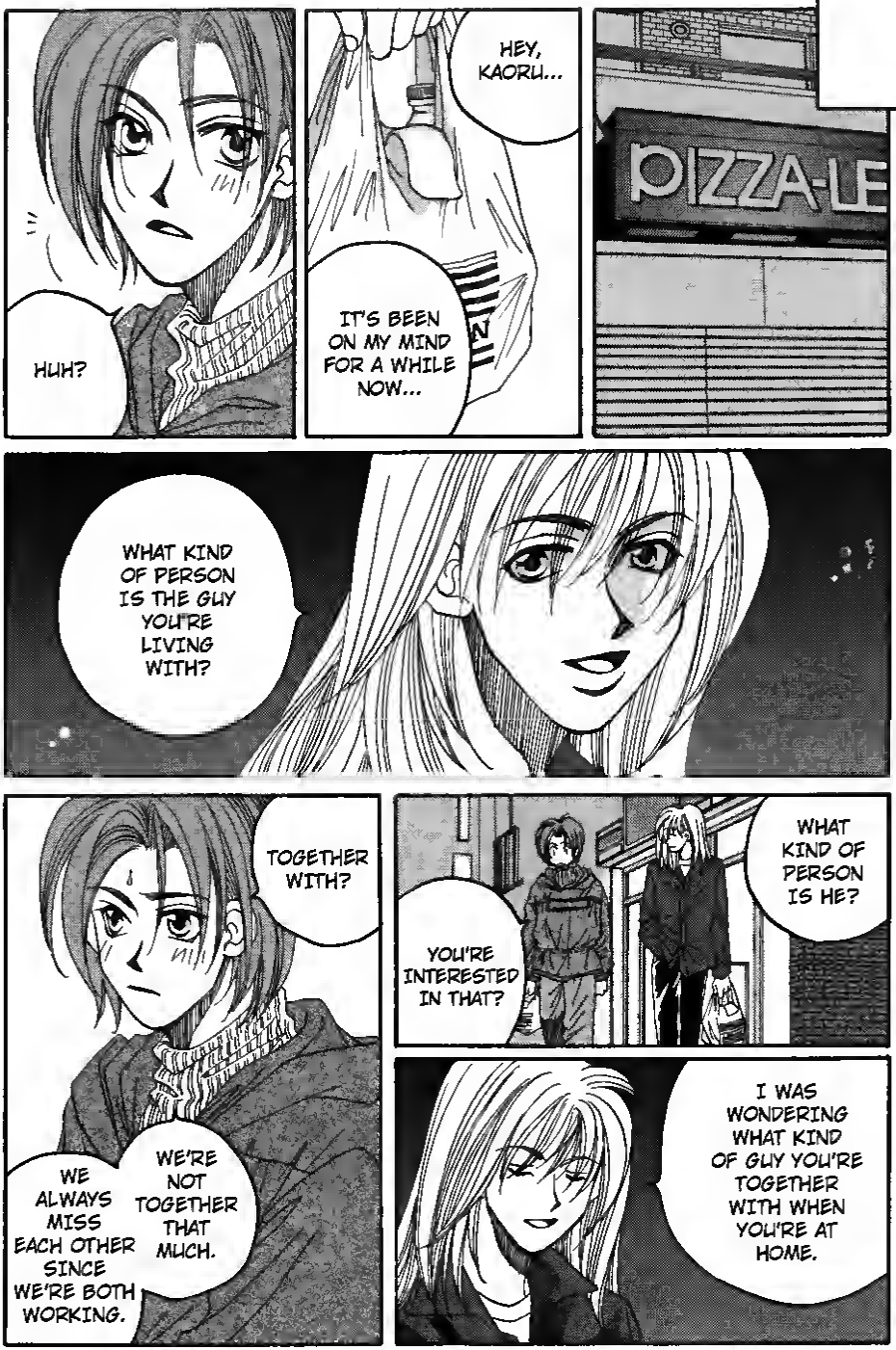
IT'D BE SO NICE. I WANT TO TRY TO SPEND MY LIFE LIKE THAT TOO...


YES!
RIGHT NOW, I'M A MAN OF PERSE-VERANCE!
YOU STILL HAVEN'T MADE A MOVE ON THAT KID YET?
SIGH
PATIENCE IS BAD FOR ME...
STAND
すっ
OF COURSE THERE IS!
WOULDN'T IT BE FINE IF YOU DO WHAT YOU ALWAYS DO?
IS THERE A POINT TO GOING THAT FAR?
I WANT TO FORCE HIM TO MAKE SURE OF HIS INTENTIONS ON HIS OWN.
I WANT TO FORCE KAORU TO MAKE THE DECISION HIMSELF...
WHETHER HE REALLY WANTS TO SLEEP WITH ME OR NOT...
OTHERWISE,
I CAN'T TRUST KAORU'S FEELINGS.

UNTIL KAORU CAN'T STAND IT ANY-MORE. ♡
...SO... HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN ON CONTINUING TO BE PATIENT?
THAT'S IN POOR TASTE...
REALLY?
BRUSH
BRUSH
BRUSH

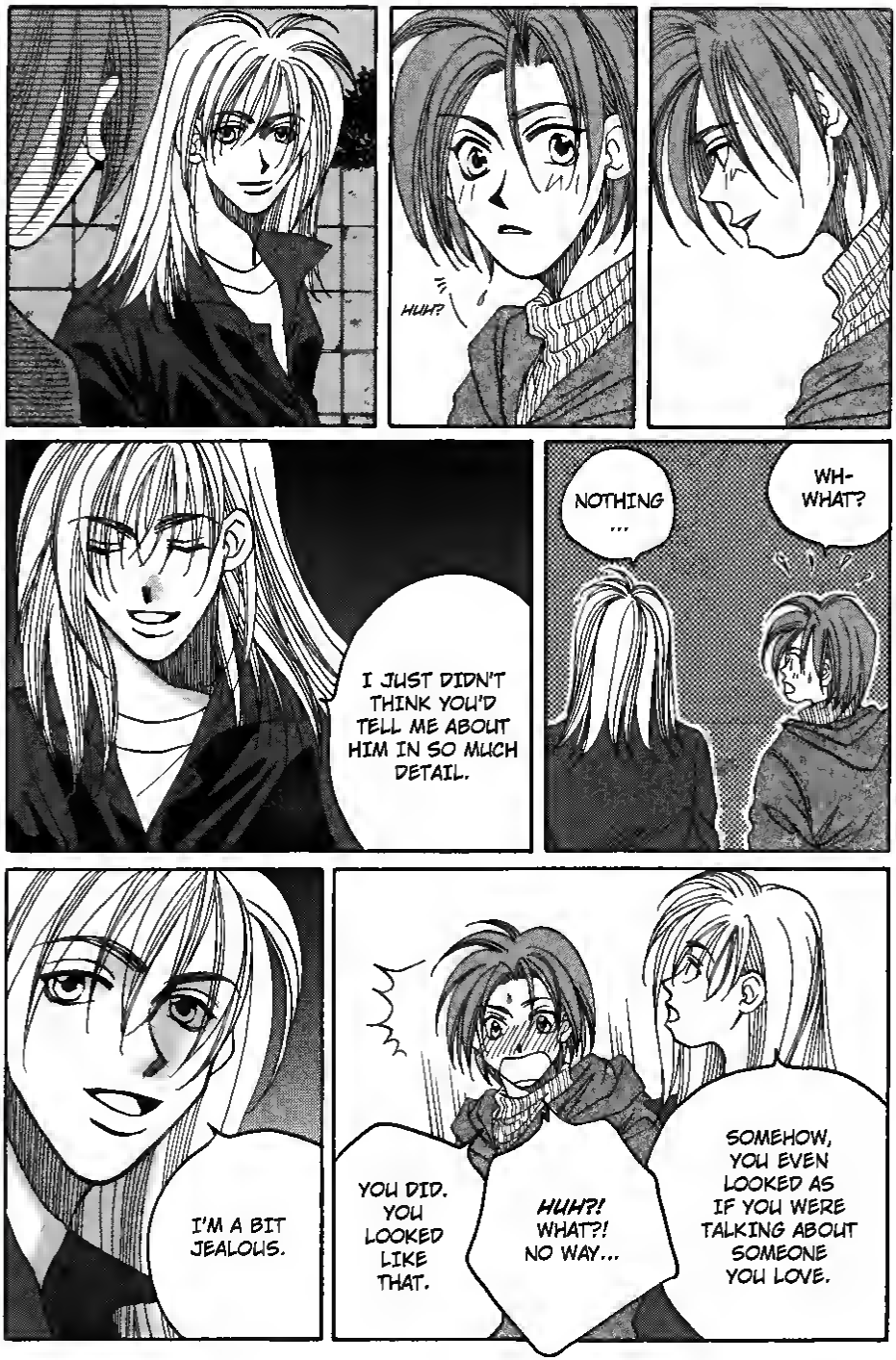

I'M NOT SURE ABOUT SAYING IT MYSELF, BUT I INTEND TO LEAVE MY GUARD DOWN.
SWISH SWISH
I ALWAYS JUST GO ALONG WITH WHAT HE SAYS...
DOES HE NOT LIKE ME?
IS THAT IT?
BRUSH BRUSH
MAHORI ...
I WONDER WHY HE WON'T DO ANYTHING WITH ME...
IS IT MY FAULT?
IF I HAD ONLY SAID "YEAH" BACK THEN....
BECAUSE I'M BEING STUBBORN OR VAIN?
"DO YOU WANT MY BODY?"
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT NON-STOP FOR 24 HOURS, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
ANYWAY, WHATEVER IT IS, I'M TOTALLY OBSESSED WITH SEX NOW.

COME HERE, BABY!
HE HASN'T SAID THIS.
IT'S MAHORI'S FAULT!!
BECAUSE HE TEASES ME AND DOES STUFF THAT MAKES ME FEEL THIS WAY!
SHAKE
SHAKE
NO, NO, THIS ISN'T ME!!
.....
I'LL ABSOLUTELY NEVER SAY "DO IT"!
WHY SHOULD I, WHEN YOU REALLY WANT TO DO IT?
JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE! NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO, I'LL MAKE YOU INTERESTED IN ME!
DO THAT WITH ANOTHER GUY...?
HOW DOES A GUY...
NOW...

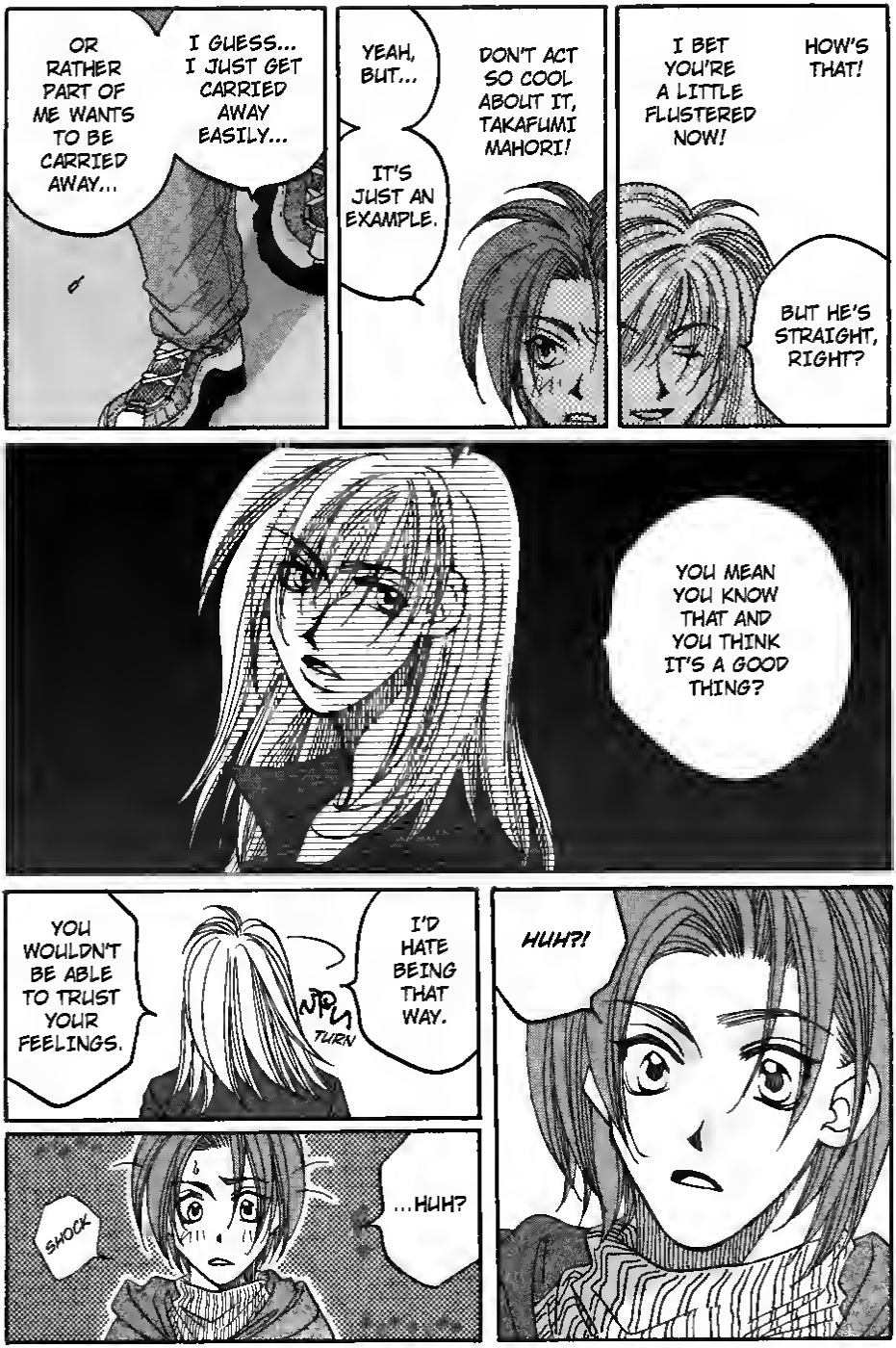

HUH?
HEY, KAORU...
IT'S BEEN ON MY MIND FOR A WHILE NOW...
PIZZA-LE
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS THE GUY YOU'RE LIVING WITH?
TOGETHER WITH?
WE'RE NOT TOGETHER THAT MUCH.
WE ALWAYS MISS EACH OTHER SINCE WE'RE BOTH WORKING.
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?
YOU'RE INTERESTED IN THAT?
I WAS WONDERING WHAT KIND OF GUY YOU'RE TOGETHER WITH WHEN YOU'RE AT HOME.

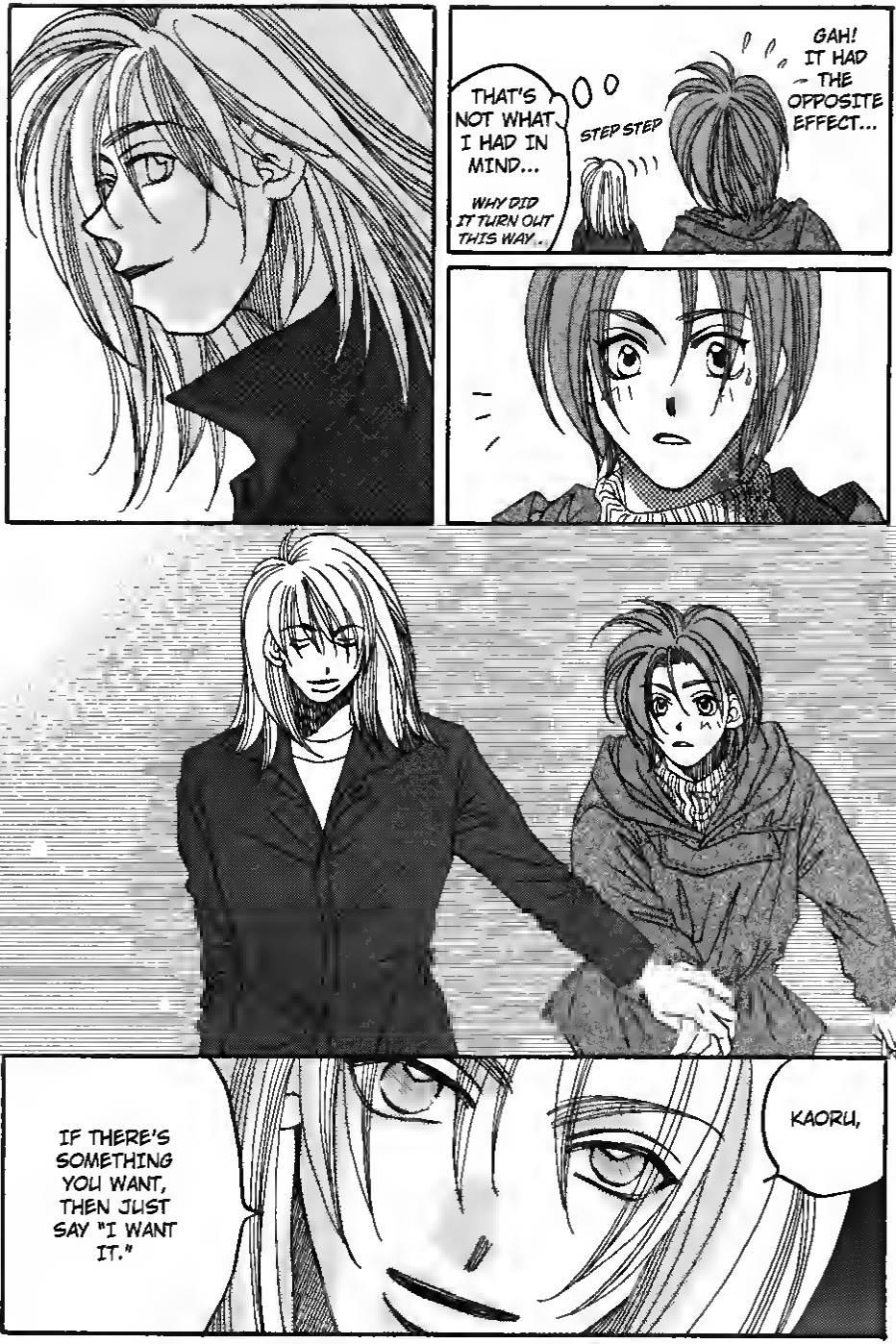
IS HE A PART-TIMER?
YEAH.
HE'S A CLASSMATE FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL.
BUT HE'S ONE YEAR YOUNGER THAN ME.
HOW SHOULD I SAY IT...
HE DOES THINGS AT HIS OWN PACE.
THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S AN ONLY CHILD, I GUESS.
HE'S USUALLY LOAFING AROUND...
AND HE'S RATHER QUIET, BUT...
SUDDENLY HE BURSTS WITH VITALITY.
HE'S THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED GOING TO TOKYO TOGETHER.
HM...
WHAT'S HE LOOK LIKE?
HUH?
UH... UM...
I DON'T KNOW... HE DOESN'T PARTICULARLY SEEM LIKE A PRETTY-BOY....
HE'S THIN AND OUT OF SHAPE...

VERY CUTE.
BUT HE'S CUTE.
THEN, ONLY WHEN HE FEELS INCLINED, WILL HE APPROACH ME AND DEMAND ATTENTION.
HE'S ALWAYS DOING WHATEVER HE WANTS ON HIS OWN...
YOU KNOW, HE'S KIND OF LIKE A CAT.
AND I THINK, "OH? YOU WANT ME TO TAKE CARE OF YOU?"...
BUT IN REALITY HE MIGHT BE THE ONE TAKING CARE OF ME...


HUH?
WH-WHAT?
NOTHING ...
I JUST DIDN'T THINK YOU'D TELL ME ABOUT HIM IN SO MUCH DETAIL.
SOMEHOW, YOU EVEN LOOKED AS IF YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE YOU LOVE.
HUH?! WHAT?! NO WAY...
YOU DID. YOU LOOKED LIKE THAT.
I'M A BIT JEALOUS.

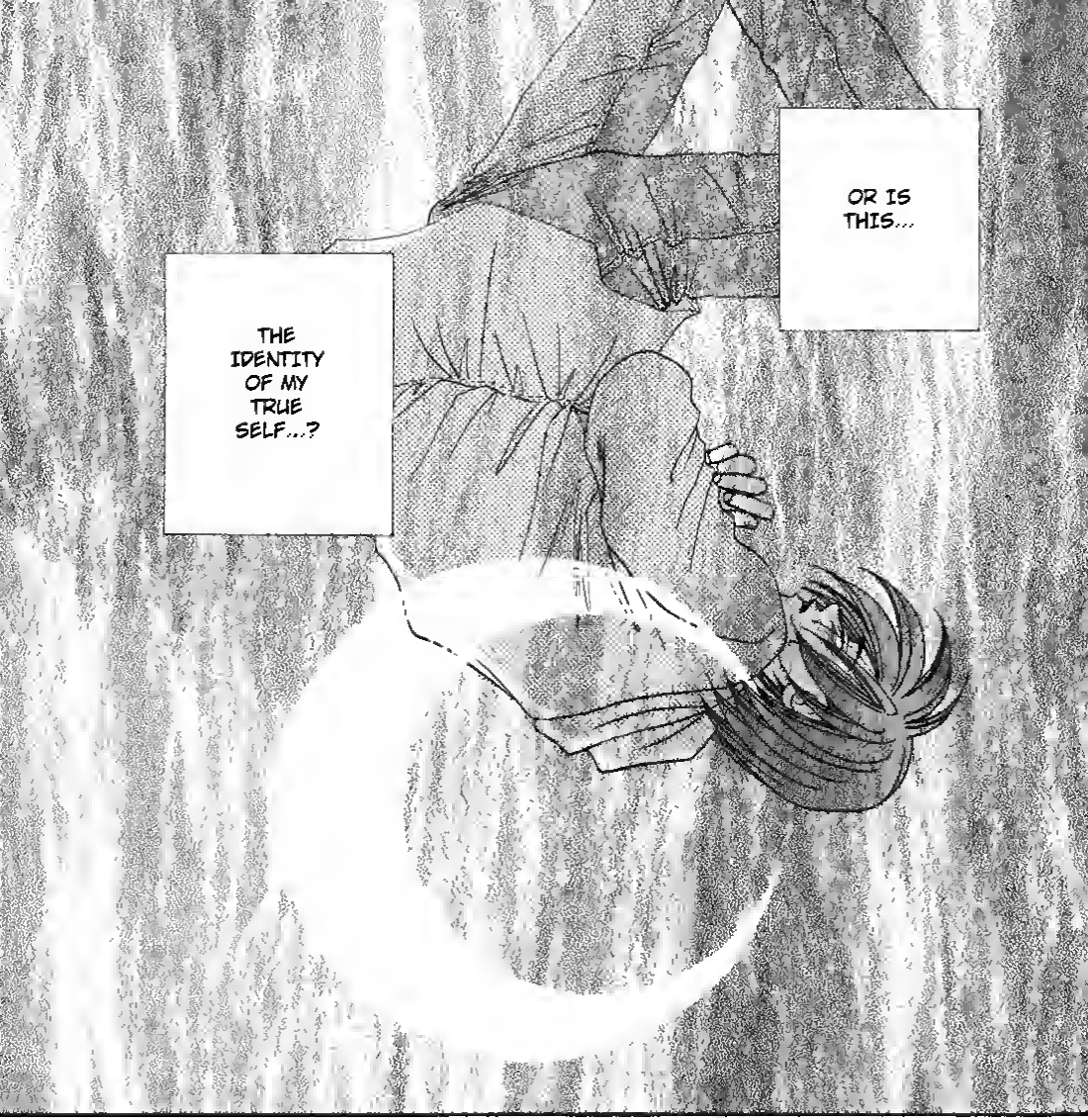
.....
I SEE...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE THIS...
THAT'S RIGHT...
SINCE... I'M KIND OF BAD WITH PHYSICAL CONTACT...
I MIGHT FALTER AND LET MY FEELINGS GET CARRIED AWAY...
IN THAT CONDITION, IF HE GOT CLOSE TO ME FOR EXAMPLE...


I GUESS... I JUST GET CARRIED AWAY EASILY...
OR RATHER PART OF ME WANTS TO BE CARRIED AWAY...
YEAH, BUT...
IT'S JUST AN EXAMPLE.
DON'T ACT SO COOL ABOUT IT, TAKAFUMI MAHORI!
I BET YOU'RE A LITTLE FLUSTERED NOW!
HOW'S THAT!
BUT HE'S STRAIGHT, RIGHT?
YOU MEAN YOU KNOW THAT AND YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD THING?
YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TRUST YOUR FEELINGS.
I'D HATE BEING THAT WAY.
TURN
...HUH?
SHOCK
HUH?!


GAH! IT HAD THE OPPOSITE EFFECT...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND...
WHY DID IT TURN OUT THIS WAY..
STEP STEP
KAORU,
IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT, THEN JUST SAY "I WANT IT."

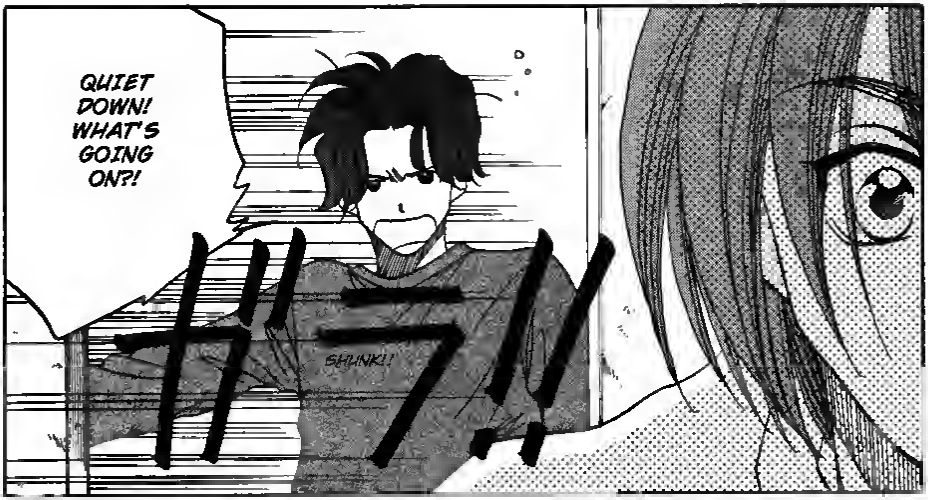
BECAUSE IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU USE ROUNDABOUT TACTICS.
BA-DUM
I LOVE YOU, KAORU.
I'LL DO ANYTHING...
I WILL DO WHATEVER IT IS YOU WANT, KAORU.
HE'S SO CALM AND COLLECTED.
HE WON'T TOLERATE ANY CHEAP TRICKS.
I'M ALWAYS...
THINKING ABOUT YOU....

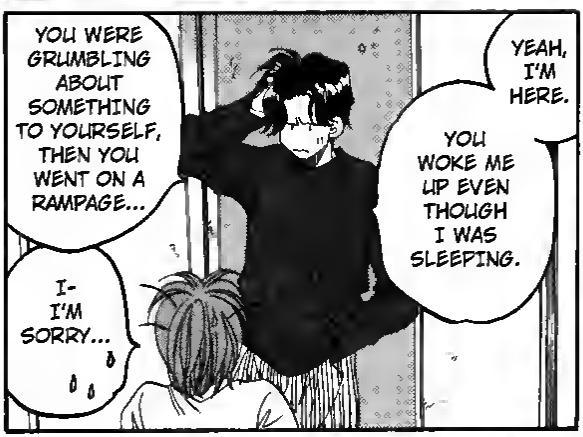
NOT FROM THE OUTSIDE BUT FROM THE INSIDE.
THIS FEELING OF BEING INVADED...
I'M BECOMING STRANGE.
THIS MAN...
WHAT TYPE OF PERSON DOES HE INTEND TO CHANGE ME INTO?

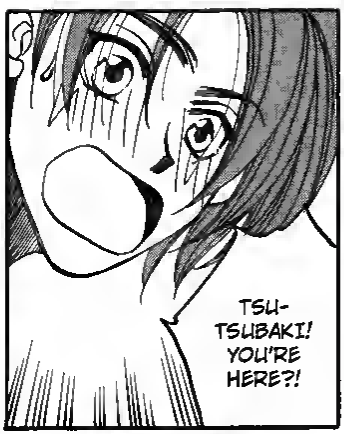

THE IDENTITY OF MY TRUE SELF...?
OR IS THIS...

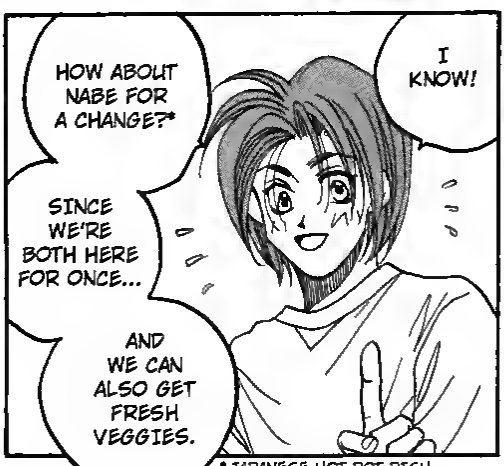
YAWN
SHUNK
SCRATCH
TSUBAKI...
ISN'T BACK YET?
IT'S COLD...
I DON'T WANT TO GO OUTSIDE...
WHAT A PAIN.
SLUMP
SHOOT.
THERE'S NOTHING TO EAT...
KAPAAP
I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO SHOPPING.

"I WILL DO WHATEVER IT IS YOU WANT, KAORU."
BA-DUM...
"JUST SAY 'I WANT IT.'"
EVEN THOUGH I WANT HIM TO DO SOMETHING...
EVEN THOUGH... I WANT HIM TO DO IT...
I CAN'T.
I CAN'T SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
どげんっ!!
WHAM!
DON'T MAKE ME FEEL THIS WAY, YOU JERK!!
DAMN IT!!
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
.....




YOU WERE GRUMBLING ABOUT SOMETHING TO YOURSELF, THEN YOU WENT ON A RAMPAGE...
I- I'M SORRY...
YEAH, I'M HERE.
YOU WOKE ME UP EVEN THOUGH I WAS SLEEPING.





*JAPANESE HOT POT DISH

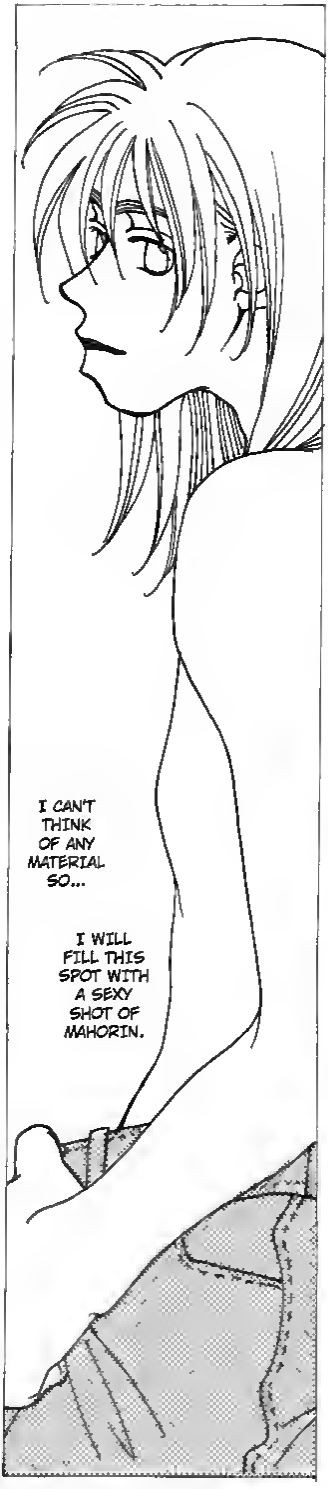
GRIN
LET'S GO OUT TO EAT! ♡
OKAY? ♡
MAN, WHAT A PAIN.
RECENTLY MY FRIENDS AND I HAVE ONLY BEEN EATING NABE...
OH, WELL...
WHATEVER...
MUNCH
MUNCH
LOTTERIA

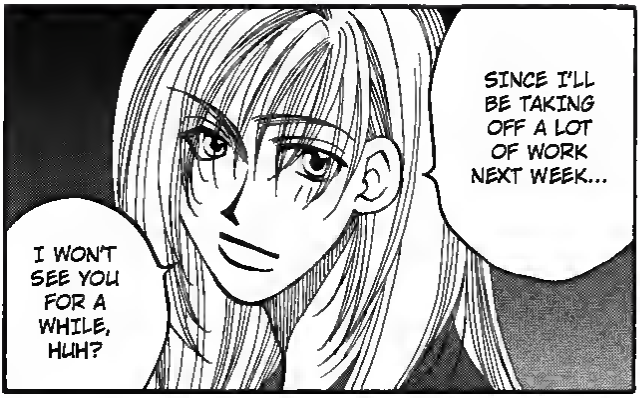
ABOUT THE GIRL...
FROM WORK THAT I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT THE OTHER DAY...
HM?
slurp
UM...
I WONDER WHAT SHE SHOULD SAY...
TO THE GUY THAT WON'T DO ANYTHING TO HER EVEN THOUGH SHE WANTS HIM TO...
"LET'S DO IT." ♡

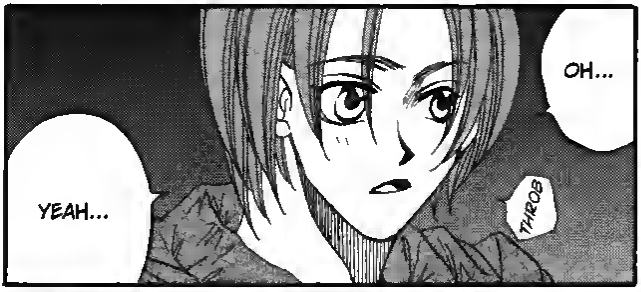
YOU WERE ALWAYS LIKE THAT EVER SINCE WAY BACK!
CALMLY SAYING THINGS YOU NORMALLY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SAY TO SOMEONE'S FACE.
SHE WAS ASKING BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T SAY THAT, RIGHT?!
BUT SHE HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO SAY IT.
HUH?

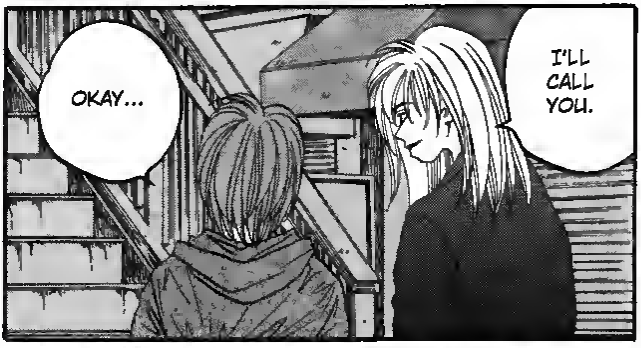
HUH?
THAT WORKED FOR ME THE OTHER DAY.
THERE'S A TRICK...
CRAP...
WHEN I SAID FLIRTATIOUSLY, "I HAVEN'T BEEN KISSED RECENTLY..."
THEN I GOT KISSED. ♡
.....
RIGHT? ♡
THAT JUST MIGHT WORK...
OH...
I SEE...

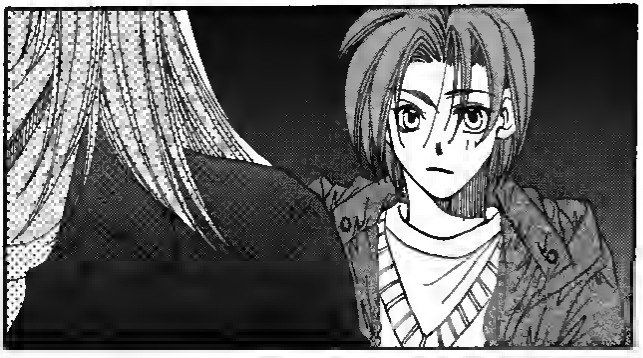
SLURP
SO THAT'S HOW...
TSUBAKI ASKS PEOPLE OUT...
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF GIRLS...
HE'S DATED...
GOOD WORK, EVERYONE!
GOOD WORK!
MAHORIN, GOOD LUCK ON YOUR EXAMS!
YUP.
PIZZA-LE
YOU'VE GOT EXAMS?
YEP.
STARTING NEXT WEEK.

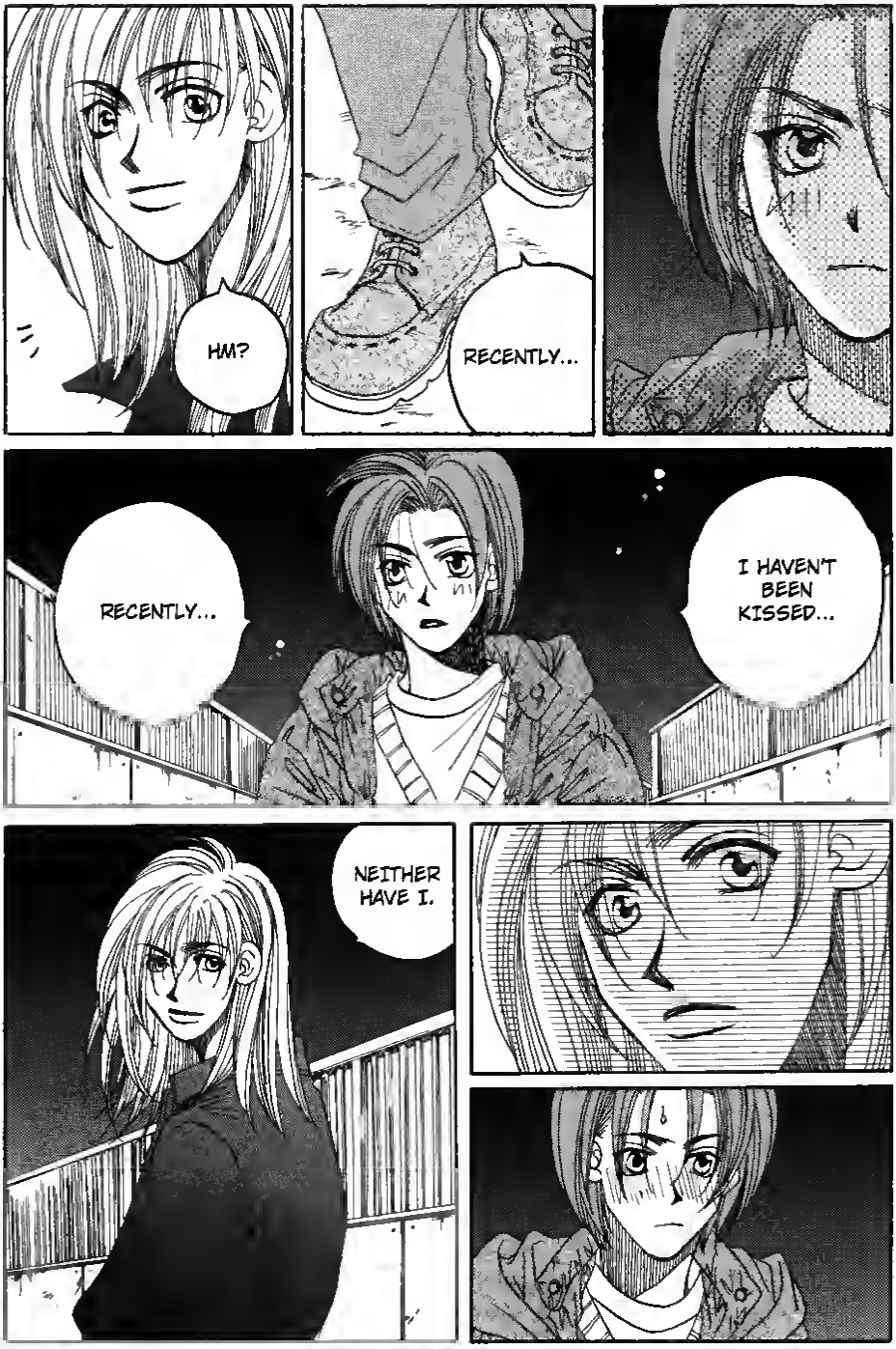

I CAN'T THINK OF ANY MATERIAL SO...
I WILL FILL THIS SPOT WITH A SEXY SHOT OF MAHORIN.


SINCE I'LL BE TAKING OFF A LOT OF WORK NEXT WEEK...
I WON'T SEE YOU FOR A WHILE, HUH?

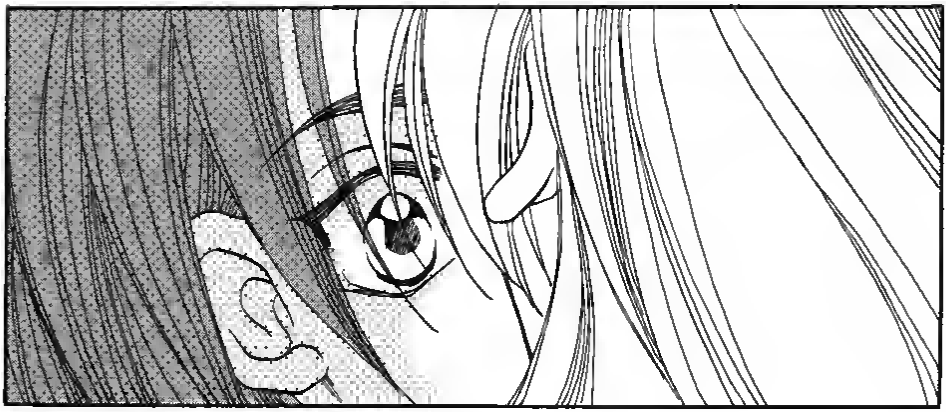

OH...
YEAH...
THROB

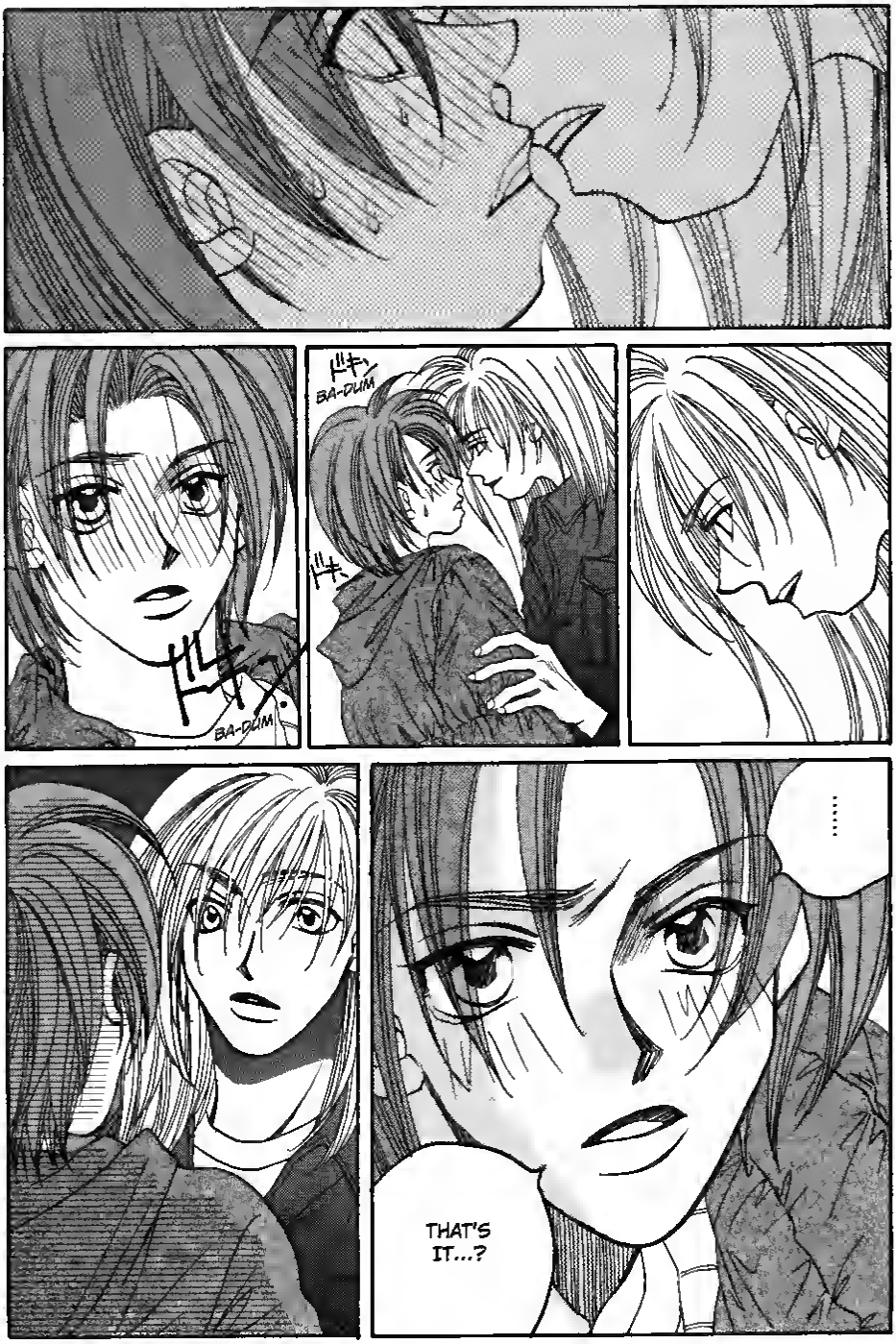

I'LL CALL YOU.
OKAY...




HM?
RECENTLY...
RECENTLY...
I HAVEN'T BEEN KISSED...
NEITHER HAVE I.

IT DIDN'T WORK...
DAMN!
KAORU,
...
BLUSH
NORMAL GUYS...
DON'T GET ANYWHERE WITH SUCH A ROUNDABOUT WAY OF SPEAKING.
A GUY WHO'S USED TO FOOLING AROUND...
UNLESS YOU'RE LIKE ME...




BA-DUM
BA-DUM
.....
THAT'S IT...?

I DON'T NEED YOU TO CALL ME!
I HATE THAT KIND OF STUFF!
I DON'T NEED THAT, SO JUST KISS ME MORE!
RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW, GIVE ME...
A WEEK'S WORTH OF KISSES...!

SOMETHING'S INSIDE OF ME.
A DANGEROUS BEING...
LIKE A SAVAGE BEAST...

CHAPTER 31: A BATTLE BETWEEN MEN

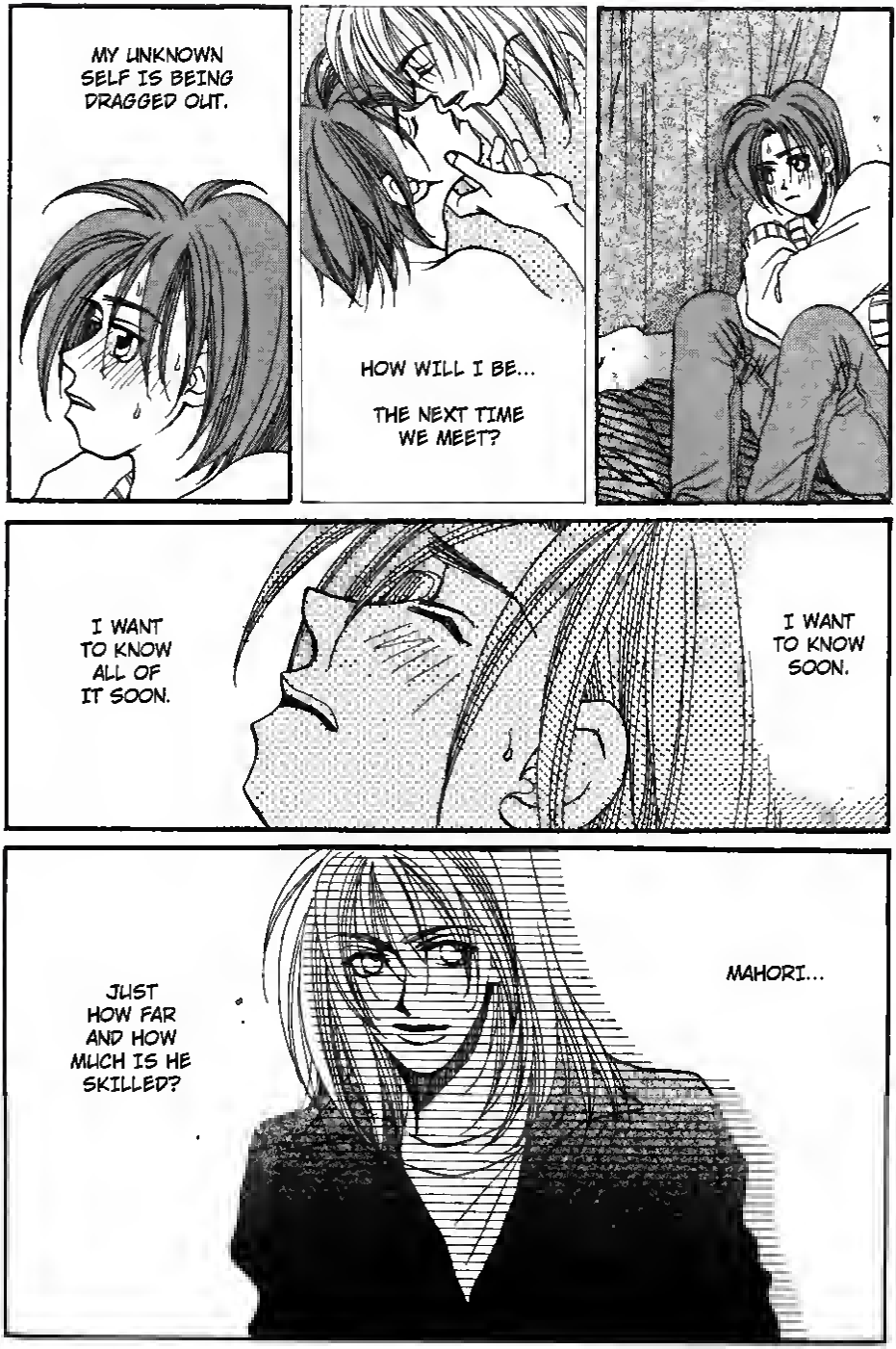
AUTHOR'S NOTES

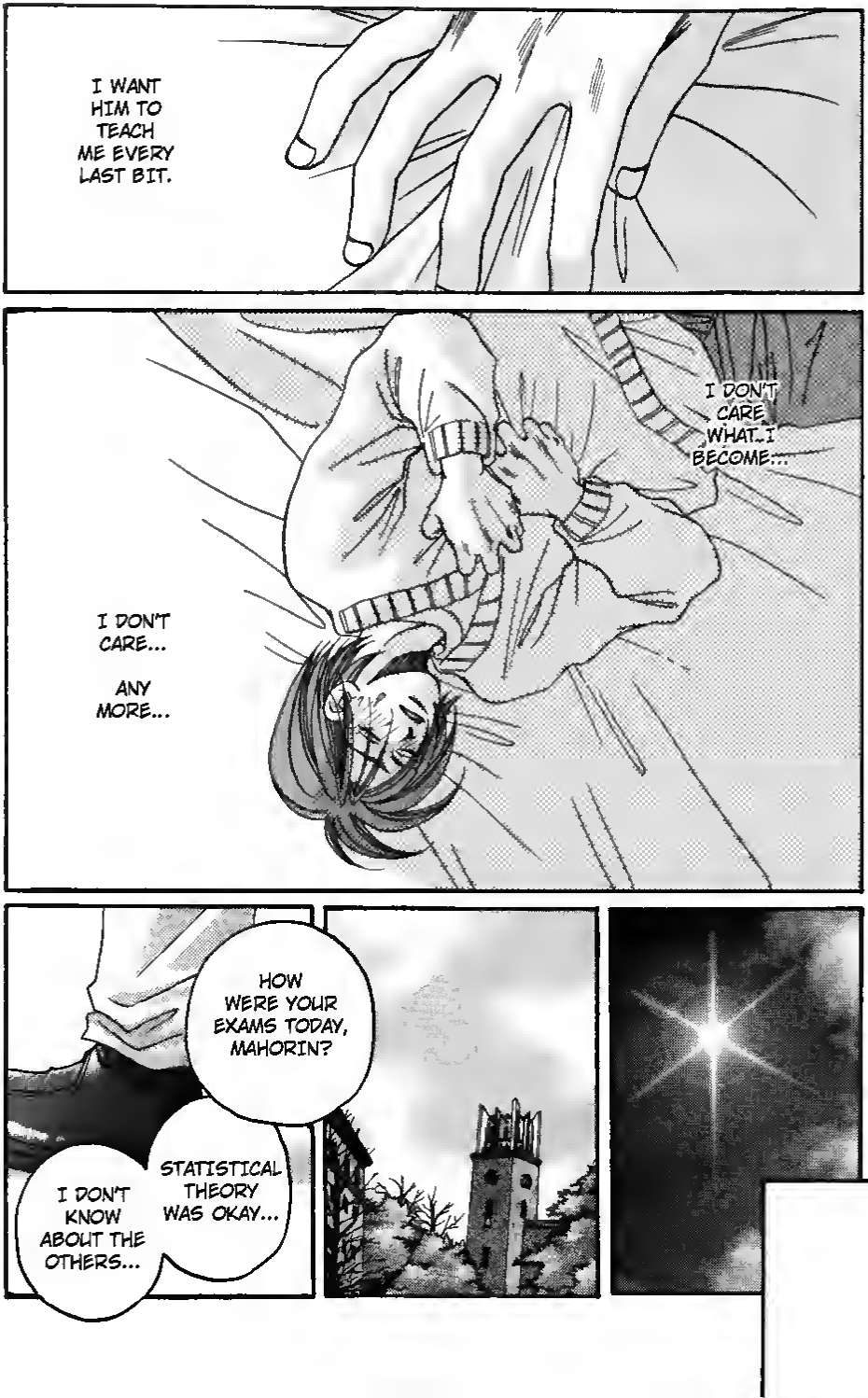
KOUTAROU

CONSIDERING HOW OFTEN HE'S BEEN TOLD "I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY," WHEN A HAPPY SITUATION COMES UP, HE'S TOLD, "KOU, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE STUCK IN MISFORTUNE." WELL, EVENTUALLY I THINK HE'LL BE STUCK IN MISFORTUNE, AS YOU WISHED, SO PLEASE WAIT A BIT MORE

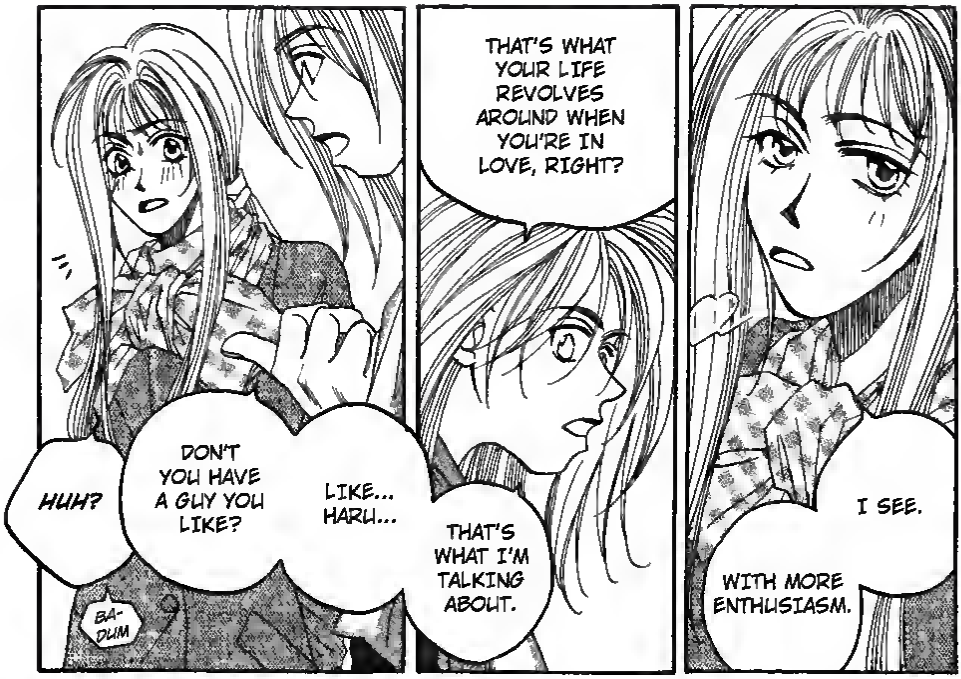
↑ PROFILE WHERE HE SEEMS UNHAPPY

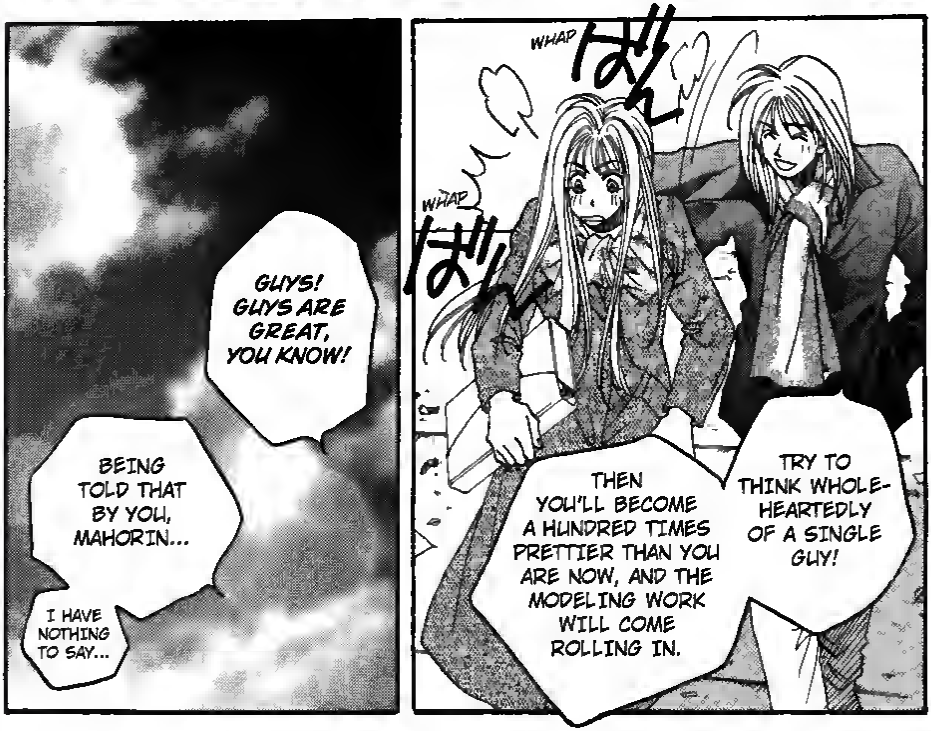
"KISS ME!"
I CAN'T BELIEVE I SAID SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
I ACTED LIKE THAT...
I CAN'T BELIEVE...

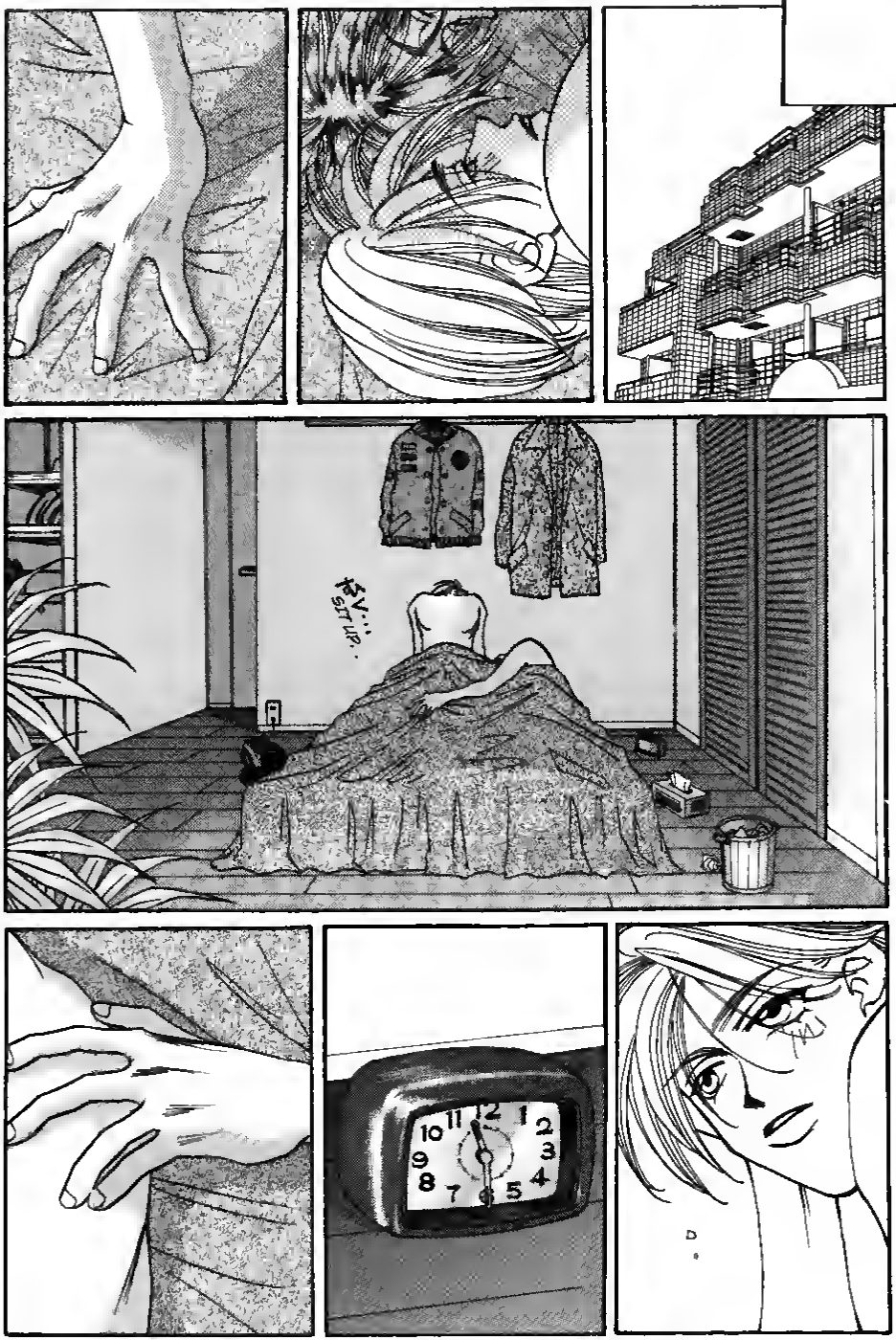

MY UNKNOWN SELF IS BEING DRAGGED OUT.
HOW WILL I BE...
THE NEXT TIME WE MEET?
I WANT TO KNOW ALL OF IT SOON.
I WANT TO KNOW SOON.
JUST HOW FAR AND HOW MUCH IS HE SKILLED?
MAHORI...


I WANT HIM TO TEACH ME EVERY LAST BIT.
I DON'T CARE WHAT I BECOME...
I DON'T CARE...
ANY MORE...
HOW WERE YOUR EXAMS TODAY, MAHORIN?
STATISTICAL THEORY WAS OKAY...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE OTHERS...

WHEN EXAMS ARE OVER, YOU CAN BE ALL LOVEY-DOVEY WITH YOUR LITTLE PUPPY, HUH?
MAN,
I WANT IT ALL TO END SOON.
THAT WOULD BE NICE...
YOU ARE IN LOVE!
YOU KISSED, RIGHT?
THE FIGHT BEGINS HERE.
NOW IS THE REAL TIME FOR STRATEGY!
THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON?
I THOUGHT THAT THE LITTLE PUPPY WAS ALREADY OKAY WITH IT ANYTIME...
I KNOW THAT.
BUT IT'S STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH.
HE HAS TO WANT ME MORE SINCERELY!


HUH?
DON'T YOU HAVE A GUY YOU LIKE?
LIKE... HARU...
BA-DUM
THAT'S WHAT YOUR LIFE REVOLVES AROUND WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE, RIGHT?
THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
I SEE.
WITH MORE ENTHUSIASM.


GUYS! GUYS ARE GREAT, YOU KNOW!
BEING TOLD THAT BY YOU, MAHORIN...
I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY...
WHAP
WHAP
THEN YOU'LL BECOME A HUNDRED TIMES PRETTIER THAN YOU ARE NOW, AND THE MODELING WORK WILL COME ROLLING IN.
TRY TO THINK WHOLE-HEARTEDLY OF A SINGLE GUY!


SIT UP.
10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

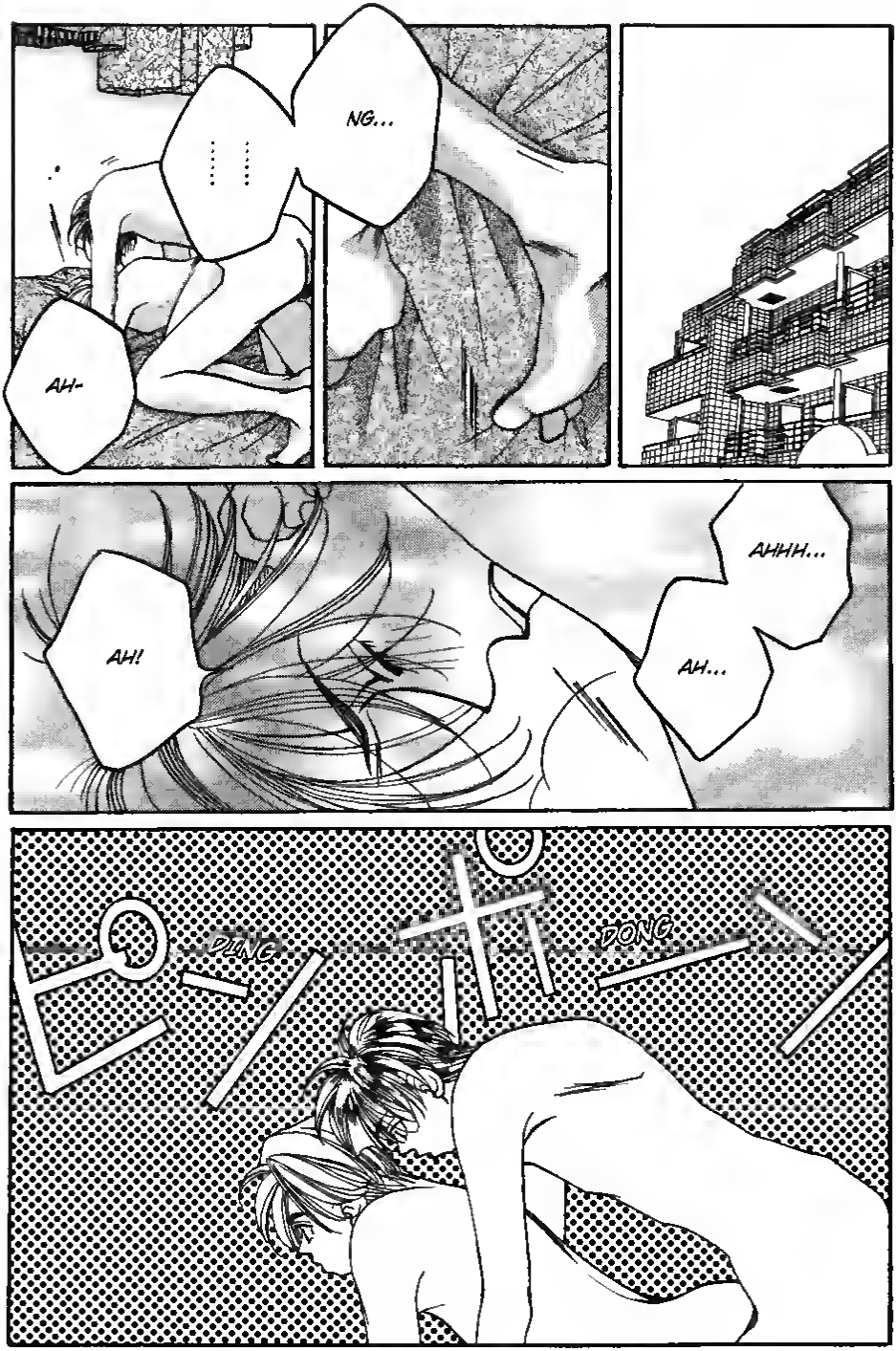
WAKE UP, CHISATO.
IT'S NOON...
NOW I DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH OR ENERGY TO MAKE ANYTHING.
AND, OF COURSE...
YEAH...
I'M HUNGRY...
LET'S GET DELIVERY.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
PUSH
I WANT PIZZA...
OKAY, OKAY.
PIZZA IT IS.
FIRST THING AFTER WAKING UP?

STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
YOU SAY YOU DON'T LIKE ANYTHING WITH ASPARAGUS ON IT, RIGHT?
I'M FINE WITH ANYTHING, SO YOU DECIDE, CHISATO.
WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT?
OKAY...
.....
HEY.
COME ON AND DECIDE...
PIZZA-LE

R...
CLATTER
PIZZA-LE
HELLO.
THANK YOU FOR CALLING PIZZA-LE.
RRRRRR
PIZZA-LE
UM, A MEDIUM PIZZA-LE SPECIAL...
ON THIN CRUST...
AND TWO GARDEN SALADS...
AAAH!
PIZZA-LE STAFF
DRINKS... UM....
YES... OH... OKAY, PLEASE MAKE IT THE COMBO THEN...
AND THE JAPANESE-STYLE CHICKEN.
THAT TOO!

UH, UM... TWO OOLONG TEAS!!
EXCUSE ME?
YES.
YES, YES!
IDIOT...
KOU....
YOU'RE REALLY SENSITIVE HERE...
CLATTER
YOU IDIOT!
MAKING ME MOAN LIKE THAT...
NOW'S NOT THE TIME...
TO FIND THAT OUT...

THAT'S RIGHT. I'M SURE MAHORI SAID HE HAD EXAMS...
UNTIL TODAY...
CRUNCH
PIZZA-LE
TOMORROW, WHEN WE MEET...
TOMORROW... TOMORROW FOR SURE...
CALM DOWN, YOU IDIOT!!
WHAT AM I GETTING SO WORKED UP ABOUT?
POP
PIZZA-LE
TOMORROW...
HE'LL BE AT WORK...
I'M OFF TO DO A DELIVERY! I'LL DRIVE SAFELY!
SEE YOU LATER!
AT LEAST THINK ABOUT WORK WHILE YOU'RE WORKING!!


NG...
AH-
AH!
AHHH...
AH...
DUNG
DONG

I'M COMING! I'M COMING!
URK
DING
DONG
PANIC
WOW! EXACTLY 30 MINUTES!
WHAT'LL WE DO? WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE...
GAH!
THE PIZZA?! THAT WAS QUICK!
YELP!
KICK
MOVE IT! QUICK!!
YES?!
BAM!

WH- WHAT'S UP WITH THIS GUY?!
SORRY FOR THE WAIT...
YOUR PIZZA'S HERE...
HE...
WAS DOING IT, HUH?
TH- THAT'LL BE $34.10, PLEASE.
MESSED-UP HAIR! FLUSHED SKIN!
CLOTHES OBVIOUSLY PUT ON IN A HURRY!!

IT'S AGAINST THE RULES!
TO BE A GUY AND HAVE THOSE EYES! THOSE LIPS!!
KIND OF SEEMS TO OOZE SEX...
OOZING SEX.
NOT SEXY...
OUT OF $50...
EVEN SO... HE...
...IF I WERE HIM...
IF I WERE HIM...
I WONDER IF HE WAS GETTING BANGED BY SOME GUY?
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!!
WHY AM I GETTING ALL TURNED ON?!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!
UH... OH!! I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT!
UM, WHAT ABOUT MY CHANGE?
HUH?
はっ

ガチャ
GATCHA
I'M BACK...
SIGH
OH,
WELCOME HOME.
ARE YOU HUNGRY?
UH... KIND OF...
THEN LET'S EAT TOGETHER!
I'LL MAKE SOME-THING, OKAY?
BY "MAKING"...
YOU MEAN INSTANT NOODLES, RIGHT?
AT LEAST WE'RE HANGING OUT!
SLURPING INSTANT NOODLES ALL BY MYSELF IS KIND OF PATHETIC!

WHO?
YOU KNOW, THAT FAMOUS ACTOR WHO DID ALL THE EDO PERIOD DRAMAS...
WHAT WAS HIS NAME... UM...
HEY, DID YOU SEE THE NEWS?
THAT GUY DIED...
カチ
CLICK
THE NAPE OF TSUBAKI'S NECK...
IS AWFULLY SEDUCTIVE...
DOES HE KNOW HE'S DOING THAT?
LETTING IT SHOW DEFENSE-LESSLY LIKE THAT...

THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WHAT AWOKE THE STRANGE FEELINGS IN ME.
TSUBAKI WAS ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
IT MAKES YOU WANT TO SCREW HIS BRAINS OUT.
HOW CAN I PUT IT...
TO SCREW HIS BRAINS OUT!
HUH?
KAORU?

I REMEMBERED THAT ACTOR'S NAME THAT DIED...
HEY, IT WAS...
HEY, WERE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
WHAT'S WRONG?
I DON'T NEED DINNER!
SHRINK
HUH?
SLAM!
GOOD NIGHT!!
SOME-THING'S INSIDE OF ME.
WHAT ARE YOU MUM-BLING ABOUT?
I WANT TO THROW UP.
I FEEL GROSS.
I CAN'T STAND IT.
I'M GOING TO BED NOW!!!

PIZZA-LE
YO, KAORU.
LONG TIME NO SEE.
HELP ME!
HURRY AND DO SOMETHING TO ME!
MAHORI!!!

BLUSH
HOW WERE YOUR EXAMS?
LONG TIME NO SEE...
.....
I'M RATHER SERIOUS WHEN IT COMES TO BEING A STUDENT.
SO I DID ALRIGHT.
HM...
NOT BAD, I GUESS.
BA-DUM
STEP
HM...
I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU STUDYING THOUGH.
SLAM
BUT I DO!
MICRO-ECONOMICS... AND MACRO-ECONOMICS...
OH.

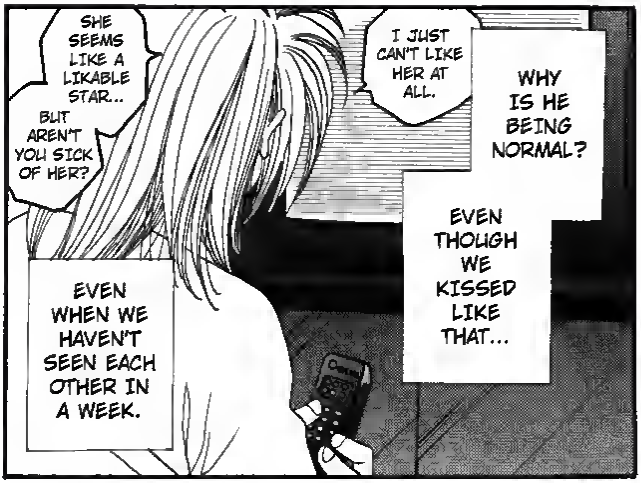
LE
FF
OH, MAHORIN, YOU'RE BACK!
YO!
PIZZA-LE
KAORU, YOU BETTER HURRY AND CHANGE CLOTHES!
OH, I SEE. THIS IS "NORMAL."
IT'S WEIRD TO THINK OF HIM AS COLD...
KIND OF COLD TODAY?
ISN'T HE...

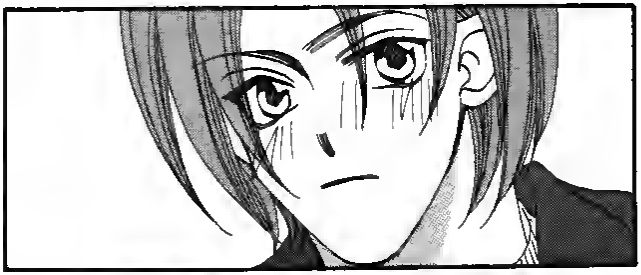
AUTHOR'S NOTES:

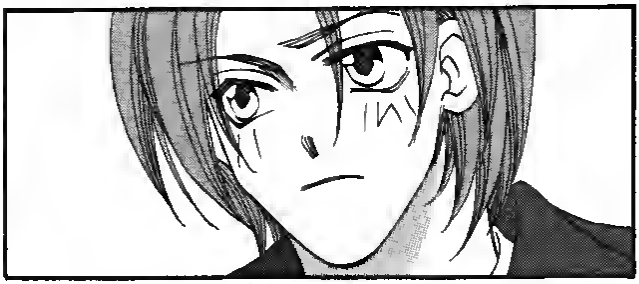
RECENTLY, OR RATHER, ONE OR TWO YEARS AGO, I STARTED PARTICULARLY TARGETING "CUTE OLDER GUYS". I DON'T REALLY AIM AT YOUNG GUYS ANYMORE.

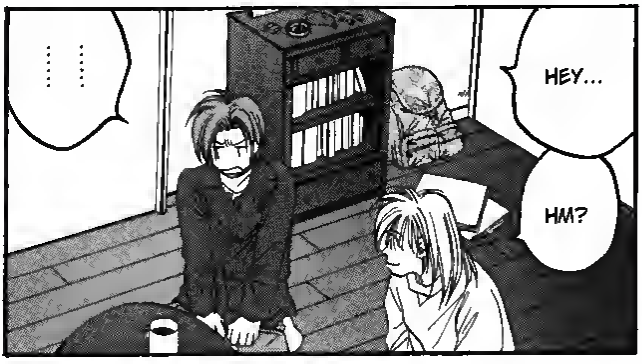
AMONG ACTORS, GARY OLDMAN. AMONG JAPANESE MUSICIANS, GROUPS LIKE BLANKY JET CITY... (ESPECIALLY THE GUY WHO PLAYS DRUMS...)

IT MAY SEEM CLICHED, BUT GUYS LIKE UCCHAN. SPEAKING OF WHICH, THE FIRST TIME I SAW GARY OLDMAN I THOUGHT, "HE LOOKS A LOT LIKE UCCHAN," BUT MAYBE I'M THE ONLY ONE THAT THINKS THAT?


SHE SEEMS LIKE A LIKABLE STAR...
BUT AREN'T YOU SICK OF HER?
I JUST CAN'T LIKE HER AT ALL.
WHY IS HE BEING NORMAL?
EVEN THOUGH WE KISSED LIKE THAT...
EVEN WHEN WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN A WEEK.



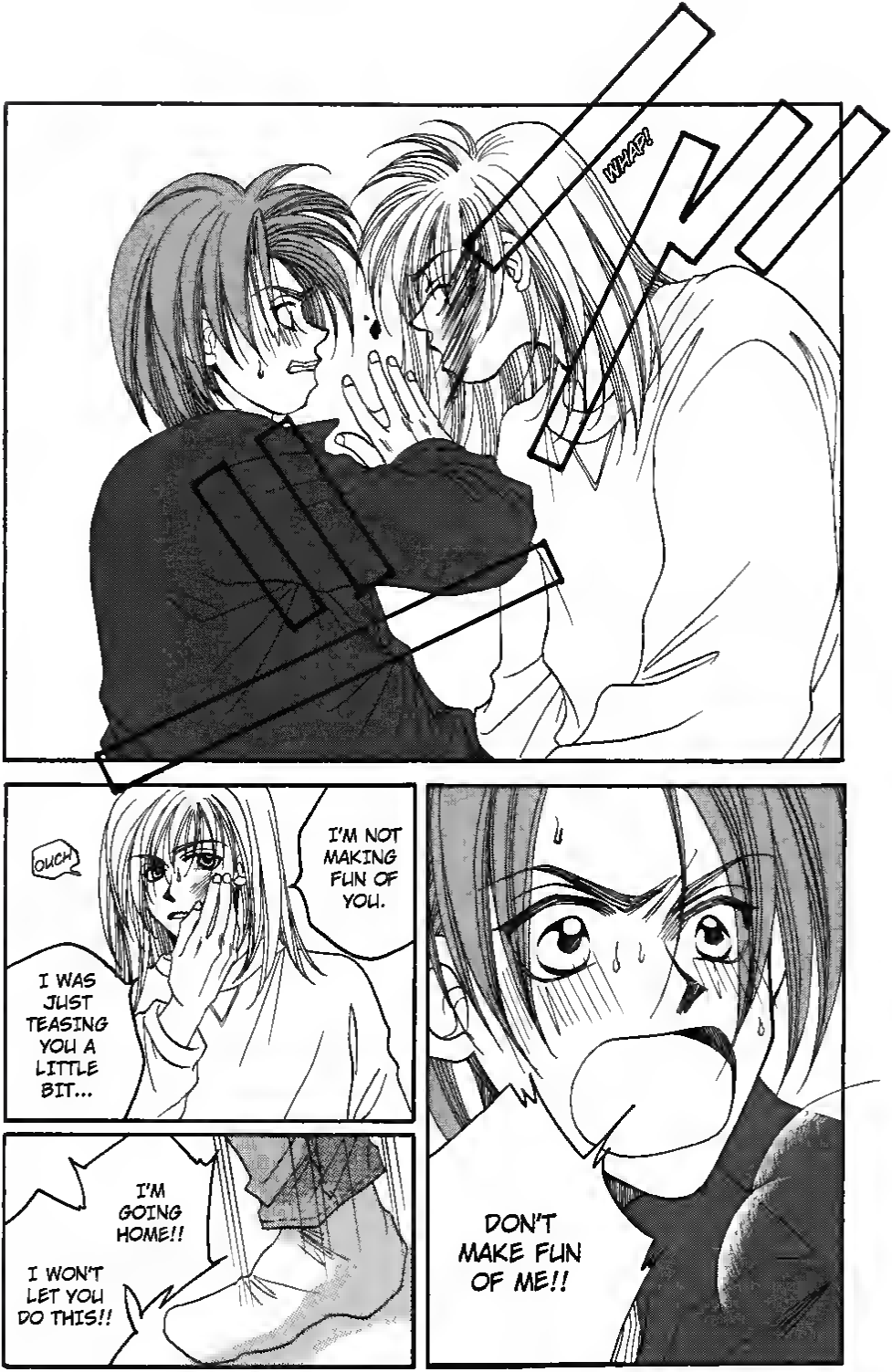




ARE YOU...
GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO ACT NORMAL?
"GOING OUT OF MY WAY?"
WHY?
IT'S NOTHING ...

WANT ME TO BE NICER TO YOU?
UH...
WANT ME TO BE MORE AFFECTIONATE TOWARDS YOU?
BECAUSE WE KISSED LIKE THAT...
BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T MET IN A WEEK...
NOW DO YOU WANT ME TO HAVE SEX WITH YOU LIKE MAD?
SSS...
UH, I...
AH!
AH
RUB
RUB
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN SAY "DO IT."

YOU'RE THINKING I'LL ACT ON IT SOMEHOW, RIGHT?
I KNOW YOU'RE INTENTIONALLY LETTING YOUR GUARD DOWN FOR ME.
JUST LIKE THE KISS THE OTHER DAY.
CLENCH
?
TAKE ME.
DO SOMETHING YOURSELF.
DELIBERATELY TRAMPLING ON MY PRIDE...
AND DOING IT JUST FOR FUN!
.....
YOU THINK YOU CAN TURN ME INTO A TOY!?
YOU STILL HAVE...
YOUR PRIDE?
EVEN THOUGH YOU PLEADED FOR A KISS LIKE THAT...


WHAP!
OUCH
I'M NOT MAKING FUN OF YOU.
I WAS JUST TEASING YOU A LITTLE BIT...
I'M GOING HOME!!
I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS!!
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME!!

KAORU,
I LOVE YOU. THAT'S WHAT I KEEP TELLING YOU, RIGHT?
FLAP
HOW CAN I TRUST YOU?!
YOU'RE MAKING A FOOL OUT OF ME!
I CAN'T STAND BEING PLAYED AROUND WITH ANY MORE!
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT CAN'T BE TRUSTED!
RUNNING LIKE HELL AS SOON AS YOU EXPERIENCE A LITTLE BIT OF YOUR TRUE FEELINGS!
ARE YOU JUST GOING TO LEAVE ME HANGING AND END IT?!

IT'S SOMETHING YOU DECIDE FOR YOURSELF, RIGHT?!
IT'S YOUR LIFE.
DON'T MAKE ME DECIDE FOR YOU!
TRY SHOWING YOUR TRUE FEELINGS AT LEAST ONCE!
AT LEAST ONCE, LET ME HEAR YOU BE THE ONE ...
TO SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME!

SLAM

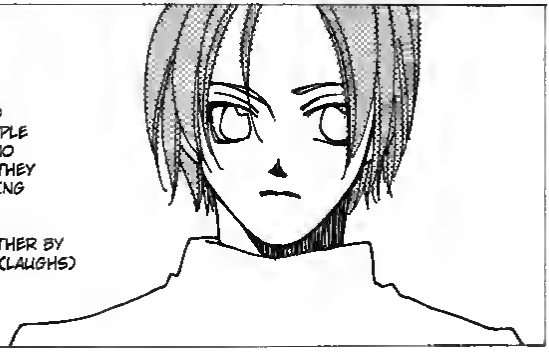
CHAPTER 32: UNSEEN NEIGHBOR

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

KAORU

THERE ARE QUITE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO SYMPATHIZE WITH HIM. BUT OF THE PEOPLE THAT SYMPATHIZE WITH HIM, 99% HAVE NO INTEREST IN MAHORIN. IT SEEMS LIKE THEY ARE STILL PREOCCUPIED WITH HIM HAVING SEX WITH TSUBAKI...

IF TSUBAKI AND KAORU DON'T GET TOGETHER BY THE END, THE READERS MIGHT KILL ME. (LAUGHS)



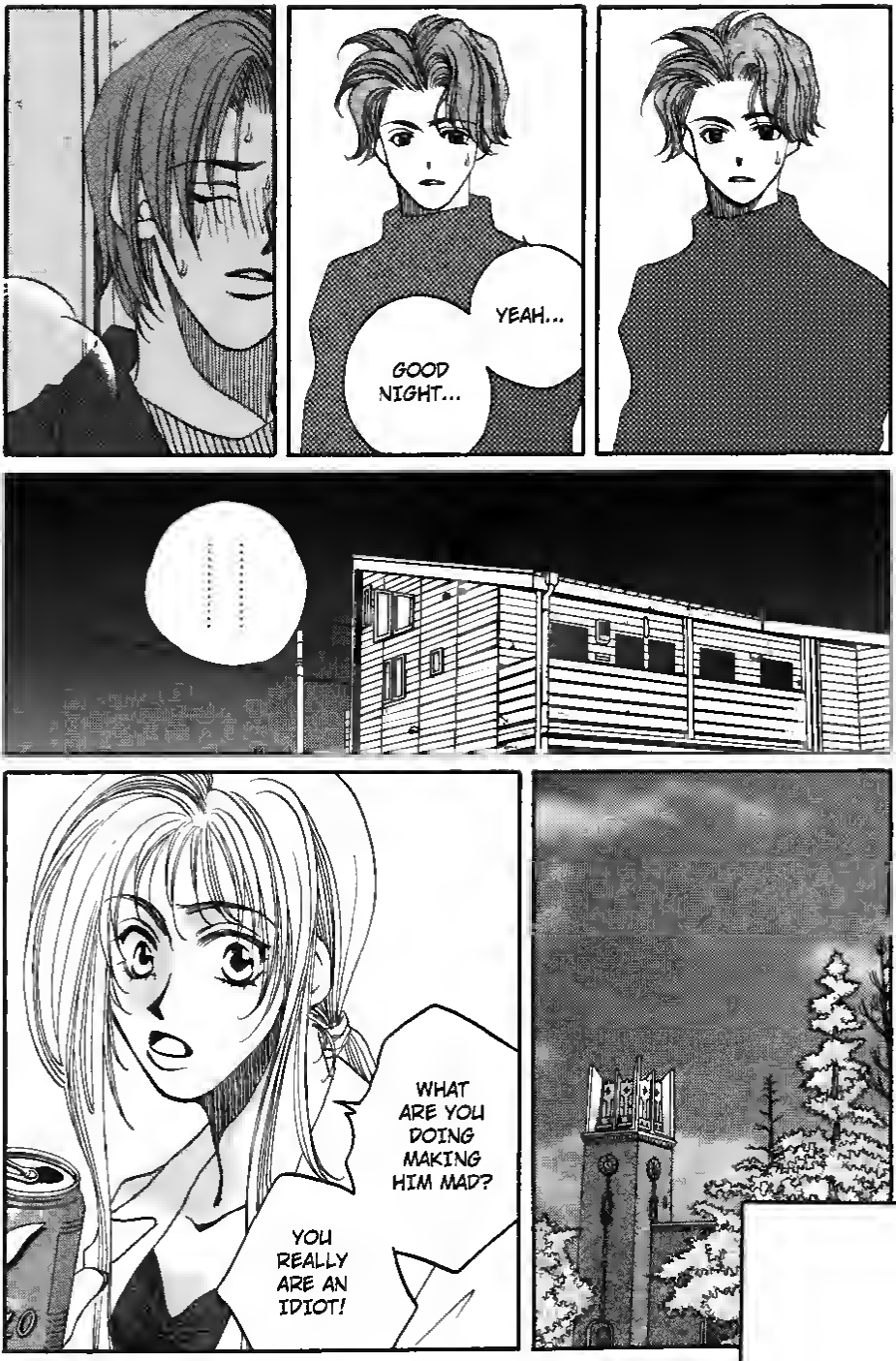
TSUBAKI ...
ISN'T BACK YET?
SHUNK
DAMN IT...
FLOP
I CAN STILL FEEL...
MAHORI'S HAND...

ZIP
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

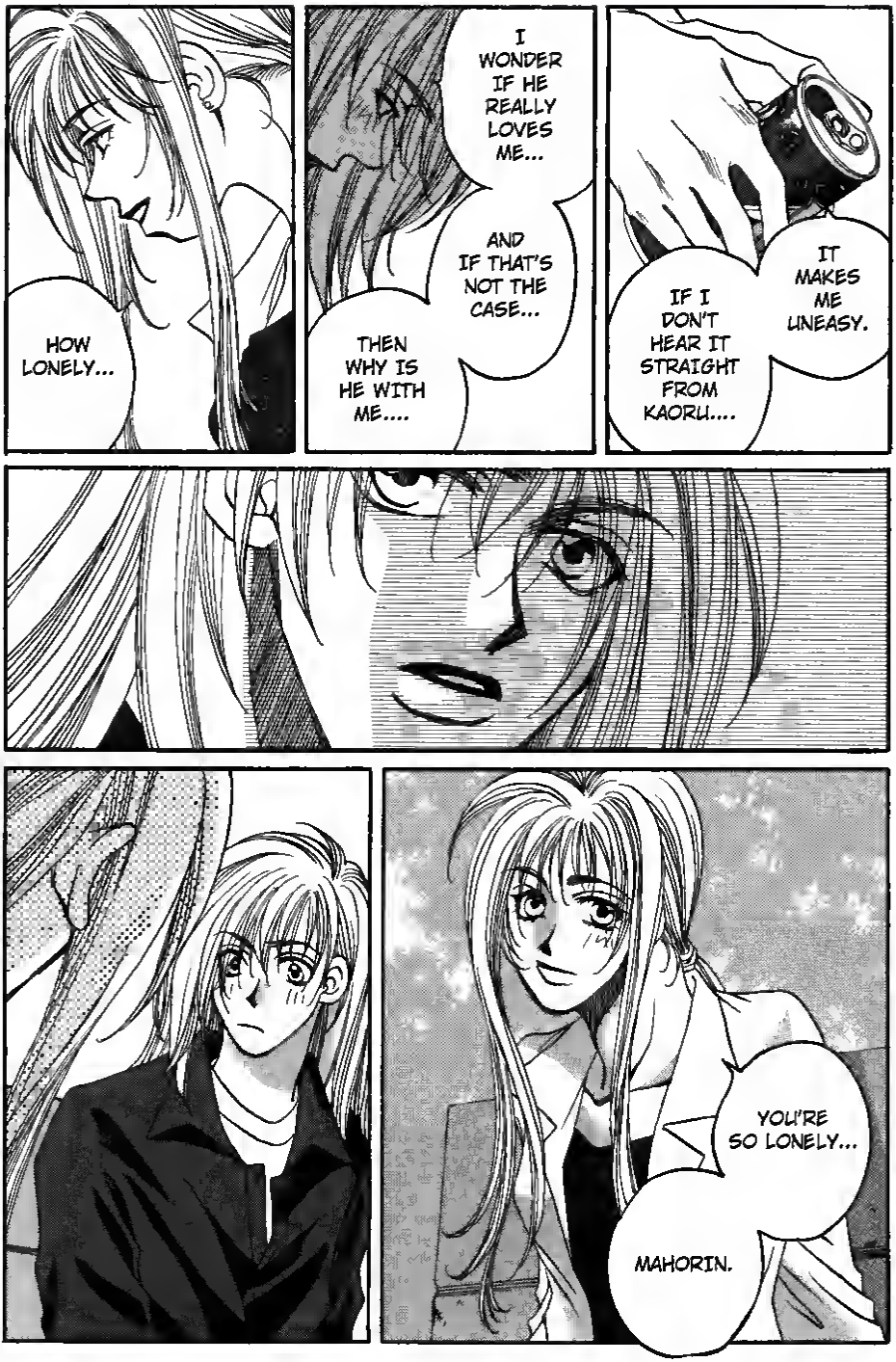
AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
WHY DO I THINK OF HIM...
WHY IS IT TSUBAKI?
WHAT...?
I'M HOME!
GOTCHA

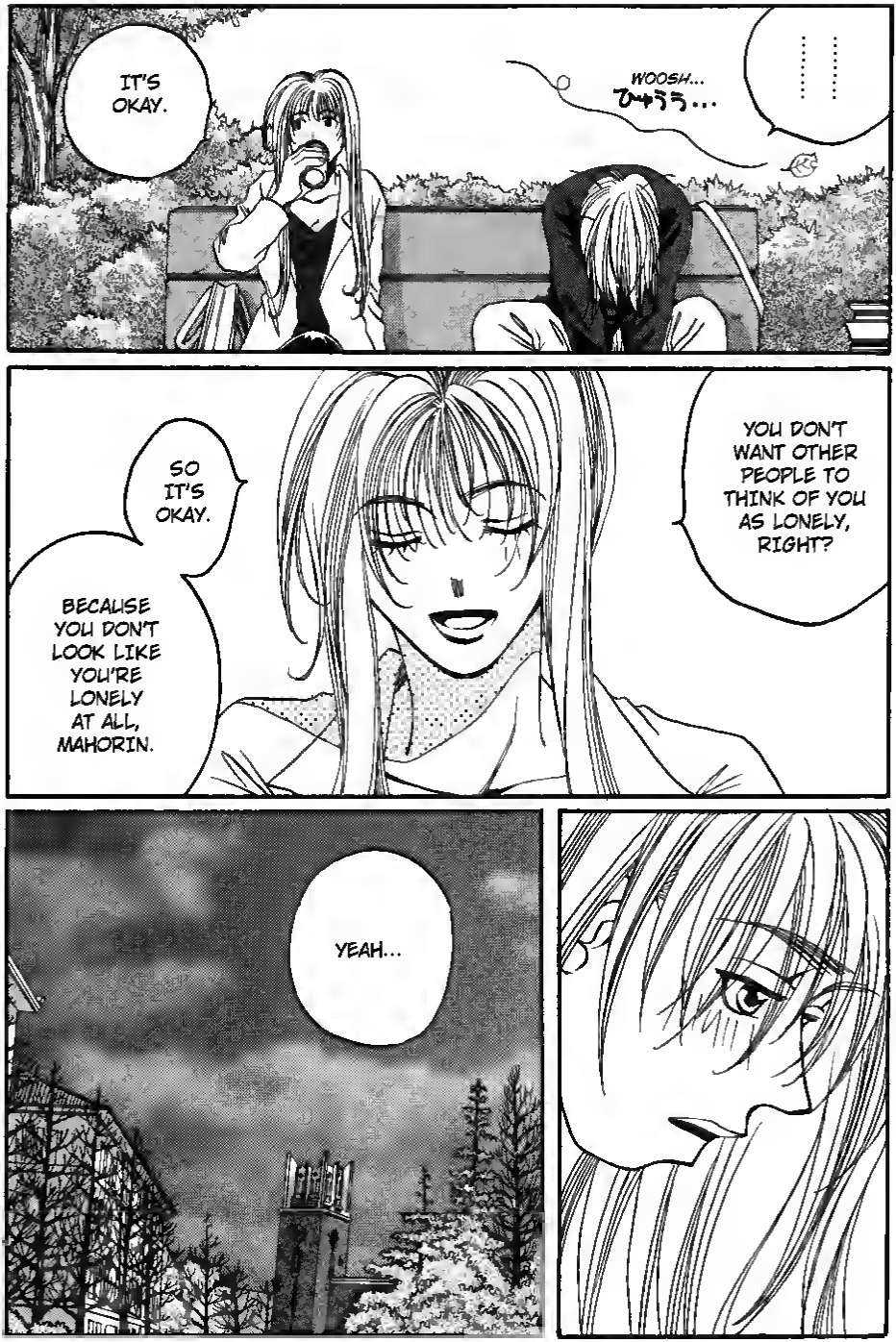
……
BA-DUM
ミルキン
BA-DUM
ミルキン
KAORU?
I GUESS HE'S ASLEEP...
SHUNK
KA-CLUNK
SHUNK
CREAK

KAORU...
ARE YOU AWAKE...?
GOOD NIGHT...


YEAH...
GOOD NIGHT...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING MAKING HIM MAD?
YOU REALLY ARE AN IDIOT!

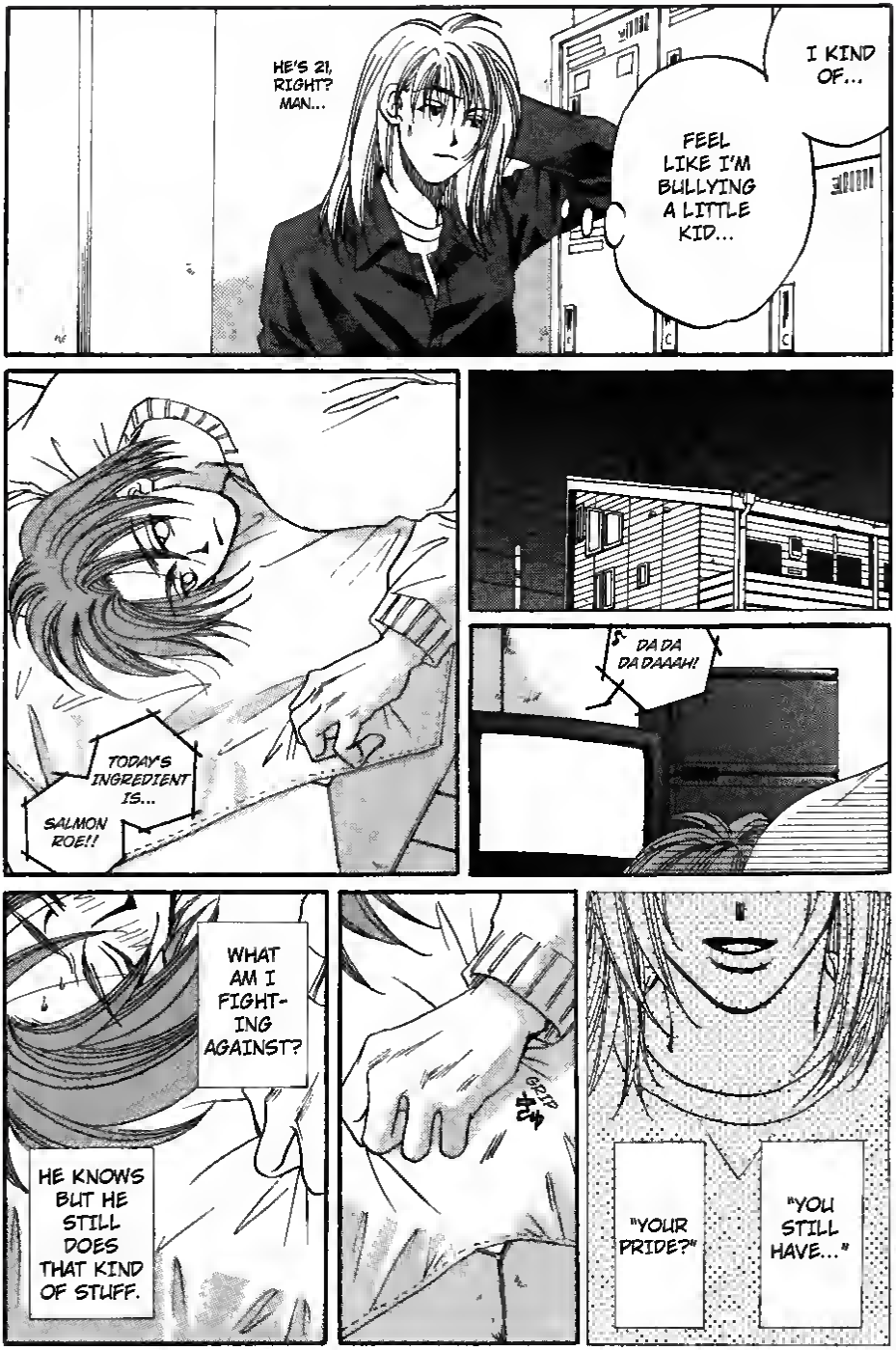
.....
SO, YOU MEAN IT BACKFIRED, HUH?
TO MAKE OUR RELATIONSHIP DEVELOP IN ONE GO...
WELL, IT'S BECAUSE I WANTED TO GET HIS FEELINGS ALL WORKED UP...
I THINK SO TOO...
BUT I DON'T WANT THIS TIME TO TURN OUT THE SAME AS ALWAYS...
STICKING TO THEORY TIME AND TIME AGAIN AND LETTING THE PREY ESCAPE RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER YOUR NOSE.
THAT'S NOT LIKE YOU, MAHORIN.
I DON'T CARE HOW LONG I HAVE TO WAIT FOR SEX...
I...
I WANT KAORU'S FEELINGS.

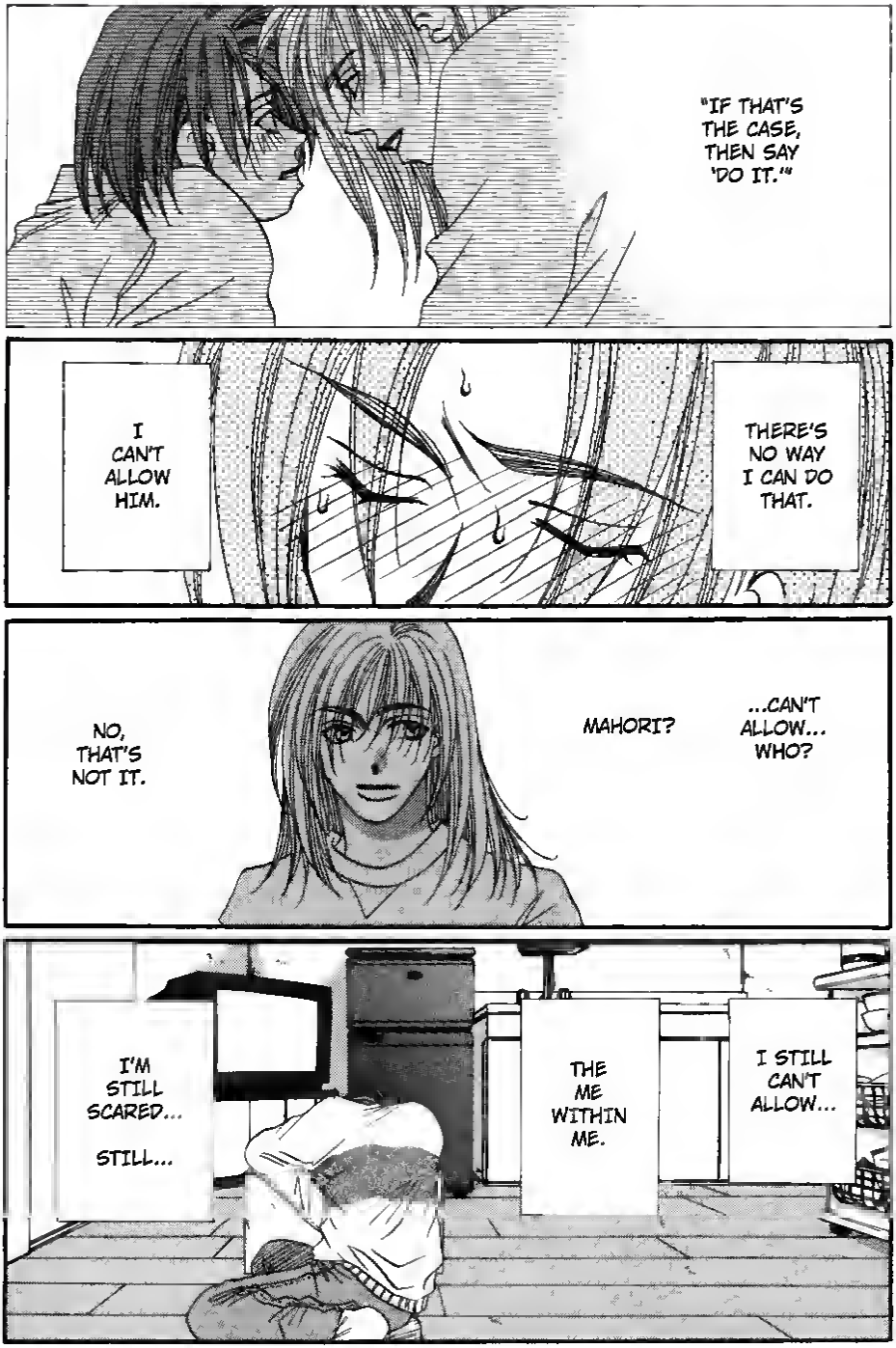

HOW LONELY...
I WONDER IF HE REALLY LOVES ME...
AND IF THAT'S NOT THE CASE...
THEN WHY IS HE WITH ME....
IT MAKES ME UNEASY.
IF I DON'T HEAR IT STRAIGHT FROM KAORU....
YOU'RE SO LONELY...
MAHORIN.


IT'S OKAY.
WOOSH...
ひゅう...
.....
YOU DON'T WANT OTHER PEOPLE TO THINK OF YOU AS LONELY, RIGHT?
SO IT'S OKAY.
BECAUSE YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU'RE LONELY AT ALL, MAHORIN.
YEAH...

YO! WHAT'S UP!!
PIZZA-LE
HI, KAORU. ♡
.....
SLAM
A!!

PIZZ
STA
STEP
PIZZA-LE
HEY, DON'T AVOID ME.
WE'RE DATING, RIGHT?
.....
SLAM!


HE'S 21, RIGHT? MAN...
I KIND OF...
FEEL LIKE I'M BULLYING A LITTLE KID...
TODAY'S INGREDIENT IS...
SALMON ROE!!
DA DA DA DAAAH!
WHAT AM I FIGHTING AGAINST?
HE KNOWS BUT HE STILL DOES THAT KIND OF STUFF.
GRIP
"YOUR PRIDE?"
"YOU STILL HAVE..."


"IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN SAY 'DO IT.'"
I CAN'T ALLOW HIM.
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DO THAT.
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
MAHORI?
...CAN'T ALLOW... WHO?
I'M STILL SCARED...
STILL...
THE ME WITHIN ME.
I STILL CAN'T ALLOW...

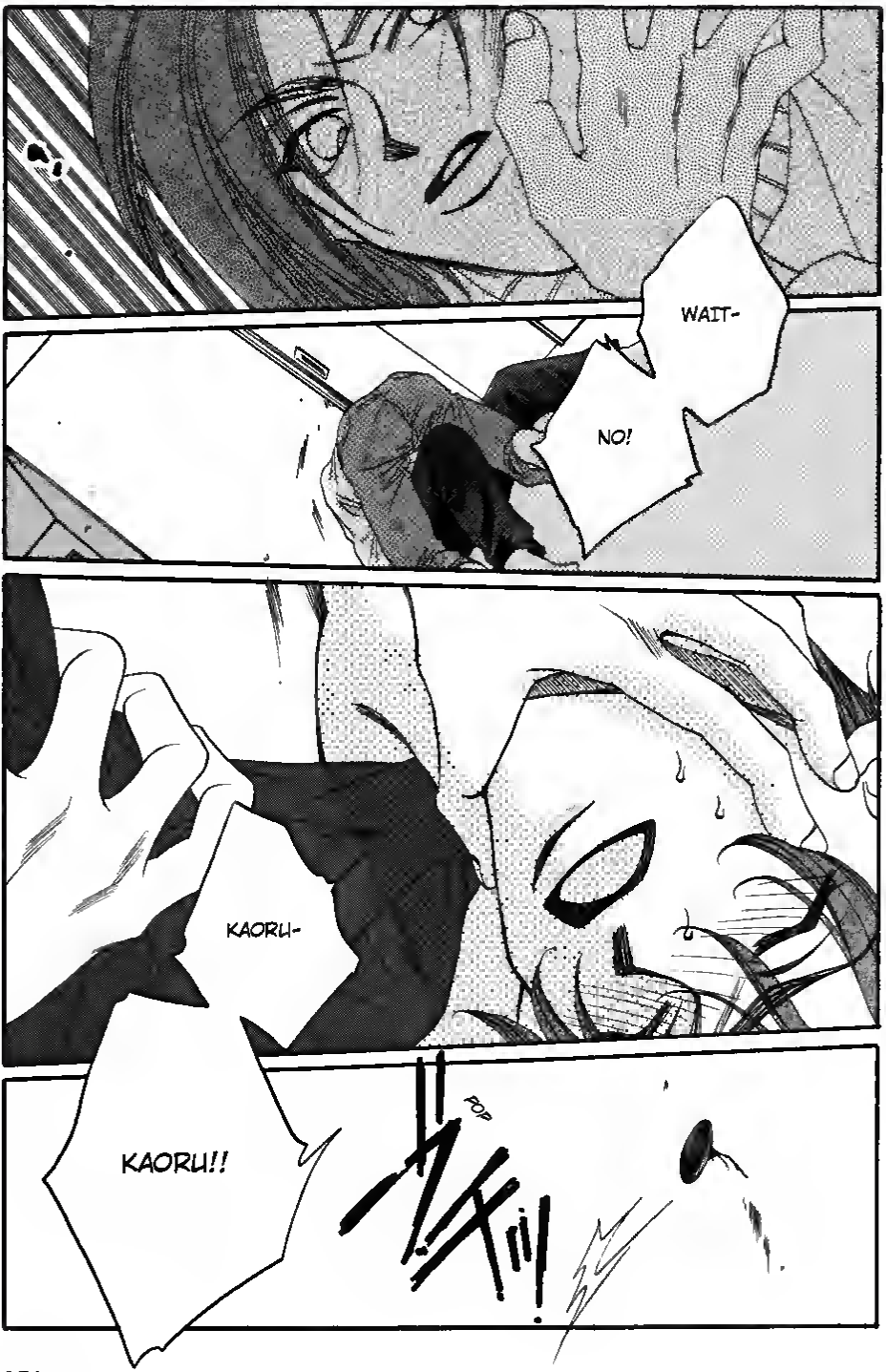
GACHA
THAT I CONTINUE TO EXPECT MAHORI TO DO SOMETHING?
THAT I...
AM I BEING UNFAIR?
"YOU DECIDE!"
I'M HOME!
HEY, WANT A DRINK?
I JUST BOUGHT IT! ♡

WELL, OKAY. WE'RE AT HOME ANYWAY.
YEAH...
SAKE, HUH?
HE ALREADY SEEMS INCREDIBLY DRUNK...
AAAAAH!
BLUSH
GULP GULP GULP
SIP
CHEERS!
CLINK
THERE WASN'T ANYTHING TO DO, SO I CHANGED TO THE DAY SHIFT.
THEY HIRED ME FOR THE NIGHT SHIFT, BUT...
BUT THE PAY IS BETTER FOR THE NIGHT SHIFT, RIGHT?
YEP.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN HOME IN THE EVENING LATELY?
"AH HA HA"?
AH HA HA!
HOW ABOUT YOU?
BUT SINCE TODAY WAS A WEEKDAY, IT WAS PRETTY QUIET.
YEAH, KIND OF...
WAS THE PIZZA PLACE BUSY?

MEET ANYONE?
YEAH, BUT...
I NEVER MEET ANYONE.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF A PAY-ATTENTION-TO-ME AURA I PUT OUT...
IF THERE'S NO ONE TO FIND IT, THEN IT DOESN'T WORK AT ALL.
WELL, I'M NOT DATING ANYONE RIGHT NOW.
HOW?
WELL, IT'S KIND OF LIKE...
LOOKING UP AT SOMEONE AND WAGGING YOUR TAIL... I GUESS...
"PAY-ATTENTION-TO-ME AURA"?
YEAH.
...HOW DO YOU DO THAT?
IT'S THE AURA YOU PUT OUT WHEN YOU WANT PEOPLE TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOU, RIGHT?

SO THAT'S ...
THE KIND OF THING HE DOES?
WELL, HOW ABOUT THAT?
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYONE OUT THERE?
SIGH
NOT THAT I HAVE ONE.
TAIL...?
SO...
HE DOES IT CONSCIOUSLY AFTER ALL...
KAORU?
WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU OKAY? WANT SOME WATER?
.....
WH- NO WAY!
YOU CAN'T BE DRUNK!
IT WAS YOURS.
IT'S NOT MY FAULT.
ON PURPOSE.
YOU MADE ME FEEL THAT WAY...
EVER SINCE THEN...
THEN HE SHOULD GET WHAT'S COMING TO HIM...


WAIT-
NO!
KAORU-
KAORU!!
POP

HUH?
.....
...UH...
...YOU SCARED ME!
SHIVER
YOU'RE A BAD DRUNK, HUH?
...IT WASN'T A DREAM...
YOU COULD PASS THAT OFF AS A JOKE WITH A GUY...
BUT IF YOU DID THAT TO A GIRL IT WOULD BE A CRIME, YOU KNOW.
IT WAS REAL!
URG-

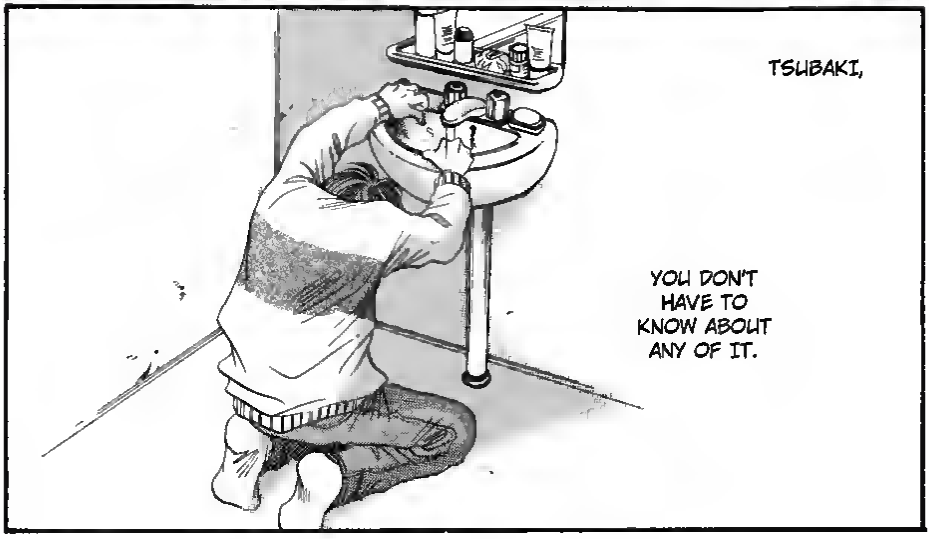
KAORU?!
STAGGER
SSHHH...
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COU-
SLAM!
STEP STEP
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

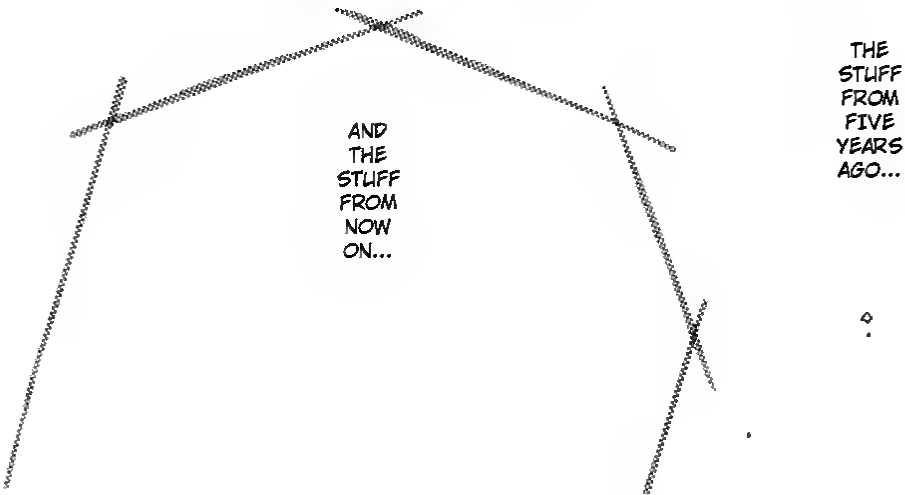
HUH?
TSUBAKI...
SSHHH...

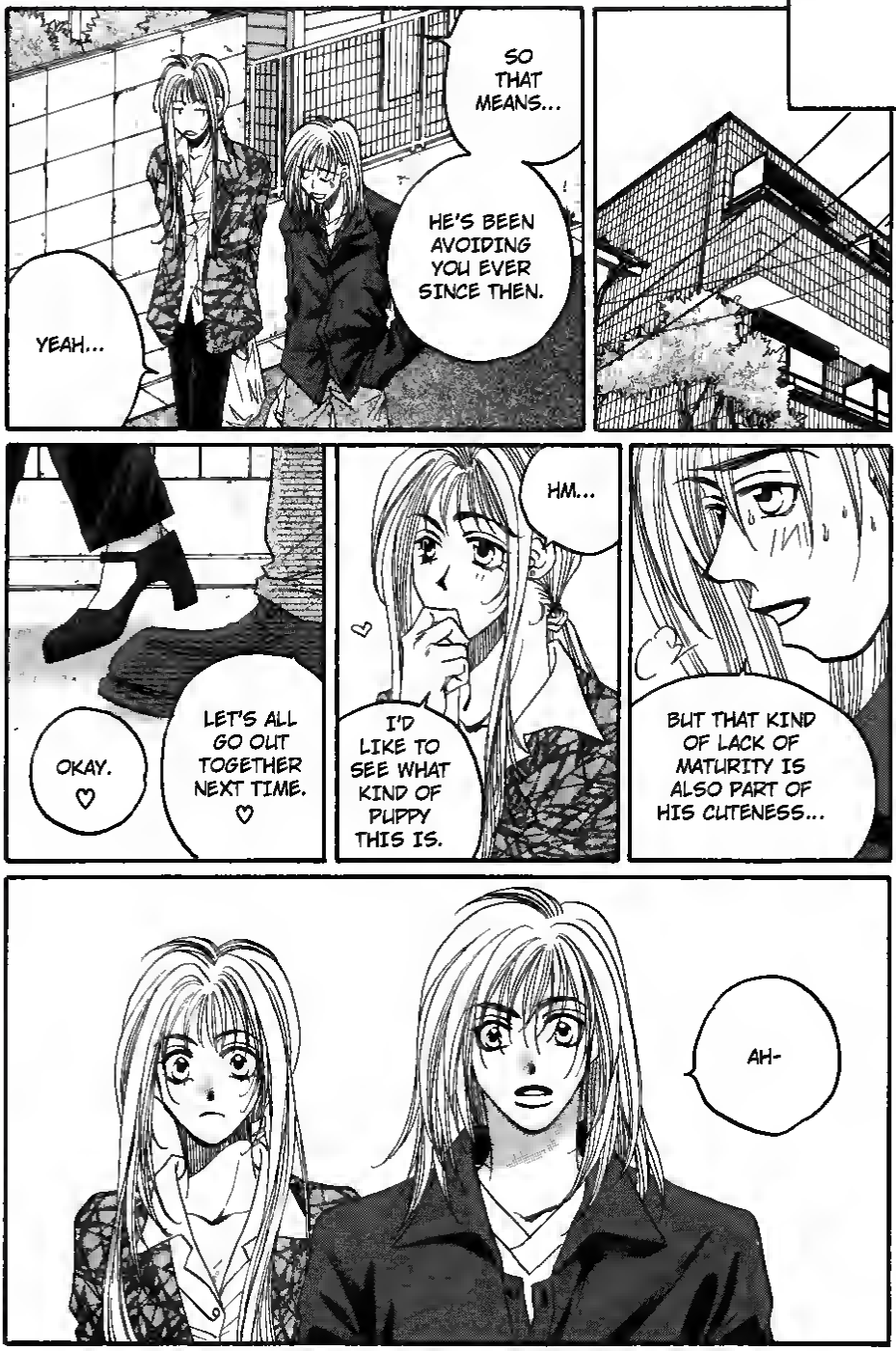
SSHHH...
I'M SORRY.
I...
ALWAYS...
TREMBLE
SSHHH...
BACK THEN...
BACK THEN, I...
BACK THEN...
I'M SORRY, TSUBAKI.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

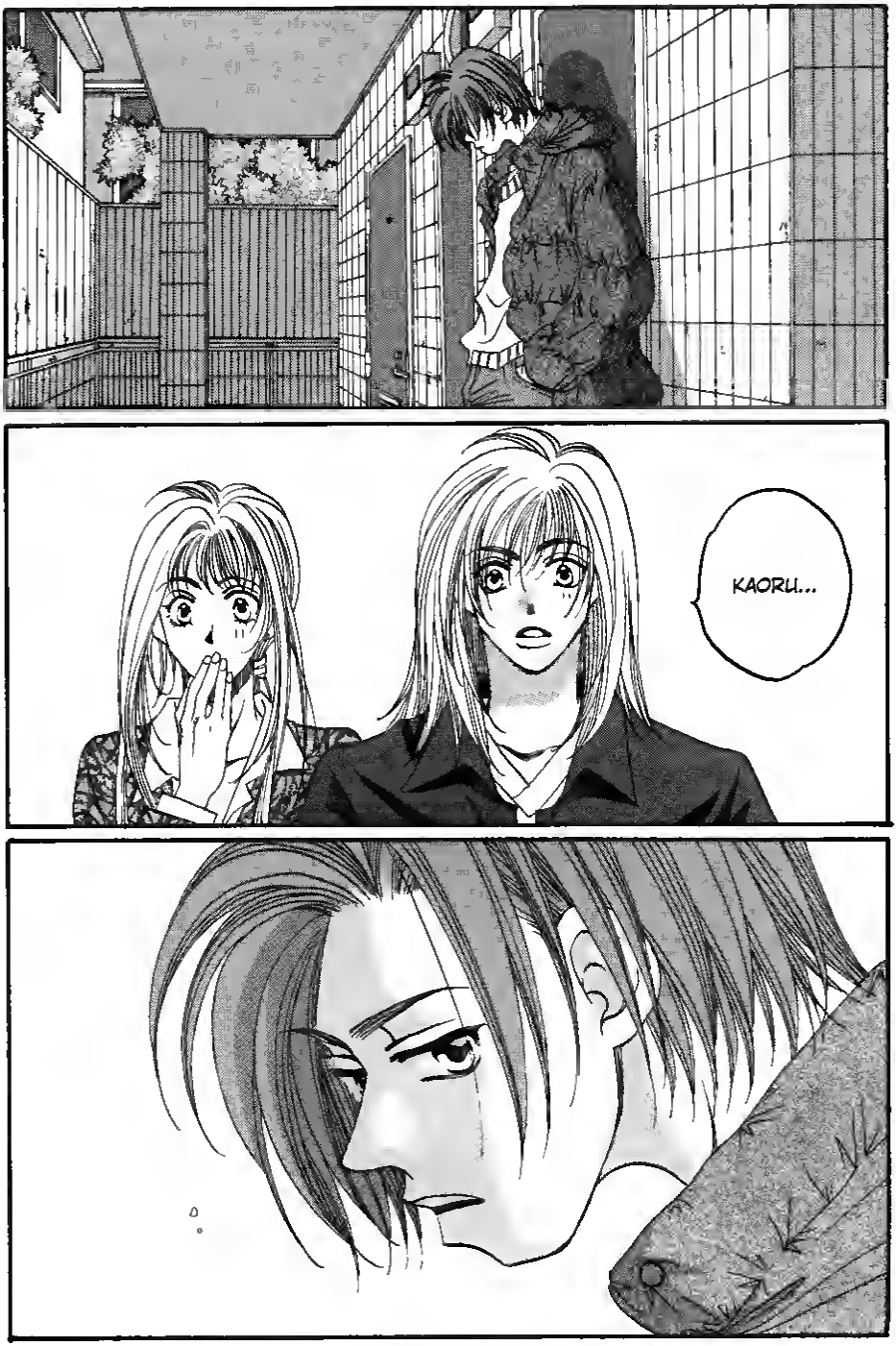
...GO TO THE OTHER ROOM.
SSHHH...
DON'T WATCH SOMEONE WHO'S ABOUT TO THROW UP.
IT'S NOTHING...
SSHHH...
OKAY...

ON THAT RIVER BANK ANYMORE.
THERE'S NO ONE...


TSUBAKI,
YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT ANY OF IT.


AND THE STUFF FROM NOW ON...
THE STUFF FROM FIVE YEARS AGO...


SO THAT MEANS...
HE'S BEEN AVOIDING YOU EVER SINCE THEN.
YEAH...
HM...
I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT KIND OF PUPPY THIS IS.
BUT THAT KIND OF LACK OF MATURITY IS ALSO PART OF HIS CUTENESS...
LET'S ALL GO OUT TOGETHER NEXT TIME. ♡
OKAY. ♡
AH-



TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 5